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PLATE I.

THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN.

[*front.*

Miracles of The Blessed Virgin Mary

JOHANNES HEROLT
CALLED DISCIPULUS
(1435 - 1440)

Translated from the Latin, with a Preface and Notes by
C. C. SWINTON BLAND
and an Introduction by EILEEN POWER

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INTRODUCTION

The cult of the Virgin is the most characteristic flower of medieval religion, as it is to-day perhaps the most immediately striking (if not the most fundamental) difference between the Catholic and Protestant churches. "One half of Christendom worships a Jew, the other half a Jewess," observes Eva in *Tancred*; but in the middle ages the devotion to the mother of Christ was universal and England was so pre-eminent therein as to win the name of "Our Lady's Dowry." The rapidity with which the cult spread and the dimensions which it assumed are alike remarkable. Everywhere the Virgin's relics were adored; cities displayed her hair, her milk, her sweat, her shift, her robe, her girdle, her tunic, her cloak, her veil, her comb, her slippers, even her glove and her handkerchief; they multiplied and spread through Europe and the Nearer East. Her house took wings in 1294, when the Holy Places were being invaded by the infidel and flew through the air to Loretto, where it is still venerated. Great pilgrimages grew up to her shrines, Soissons, Laon, Mont Saint-Michel, Chartres, Rocamadour, Ipswich, Walsingham and a hundred others. Her name was sown in wild flowers over the fields, and in England country children plucked Lady's Slippers and Lady's Fingers and Virgin's Bower, watched the "winking Mary-buds begin to ope their golden eyes", and lisped an Ave to her.

By the eleventh century (to which the first written collections of her Miracles belong) she was supreme and supreme she remained thereafter. All the great doctors of the twelfth century, from the orthodox St Bernard to the heretic Abelard, combined to honour her; Adam of St Victor wrote hymns for her and Albertus Magnus solemnly debated the scholastic question "whether the Blessed Virgin possessed perfectly the seven liberal arts" and resolved it in her favour. Later there came a doctrinal movement to enhance her glory and for three centuries learned ecclesiastics disputed over the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, but by the fourteenth century that too had become established and it was held to be the one spot upon St Bernard that he had denied it. Emperors and kings bowed down before her when they wished to defeat their enemies or to have an heir to their thrones. Soldiers shouted her name in battle, craftsmen dedicated their gilds to her, monks recorded her miracles in prose and verse and new orders—the Cistercians and the Friars Preachers in particular—were specially dedicated to her service. The church multiplied feasts to commemorate the incidents of her life and every Saturday was specially set aside for her praise. Magnificent cathedrals were reared and decorated in her honour, and her lady chapel stood in every church. She could command all the best artists and the poets from Dante downwards surpassed themselves in her praise. The very fall of humanity became a matter for congratulation, since without it she would not have been enthroned in heaven. So a thirteenth century English poem tells us:

Adam lay i-bounden
  Bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter
  Thoght he not too long;
And all was for an appil,
  An appil that he tok,
As clerké's finden
  Wreten in here book.
Ne hadde the appil také ben,
  The appil taken ben,
Ne haddé never our lady
  A ben hevené quene.
Blesséd be the time
  That appil také was.
Therefore we moun singen
  '*Deo gracias.*'[1]

As to the origins of the cult of the Virgin and the various strands out of which this characteristic and quite original creation was woven, it is difficult to give a simple answer. Something it certainly owed to influences older than Christianity. The remnants of that devotion which had once been lavished upon the Great Mother in all her various forms, lingered on and were inevitably now lavished on the Mother of Christ. Isis, Diana, Ceres and Rhea all left something to her. Their statues sometimes did duty as the Virgin in Christian churches in the South of Europe and the fact that Isis and Ceres are often represented with a child in their arms accounts for the ease of the transference. Briffault notes that " at Castrogiovanni on the site of ancient Enna, the great shrine of her [Ceres'] worship, there is still a statue of the Virgin, whose divine child is not a boy but a girl, the figure having served as Ceres and Proserpine in a previous

[1] Chambers and Sidgwick, *Early English Lyrics* (1907), p. 102.

sanctuary of the goddess."[1] She inherited not only their statues, but the traditions of their special worship; the old rite of offering cakes to the Queen of Heaven still survives, and in the folklore of Catholic Europe the Virgin is universally identified with the moon. "In France," says Briffault again, "the peasants of the Perche district call the moon 'Notre Dame'. In Portugal . . . the country people call the moon 'The Mother of God,'" and in Sicily (that paradise of folklore) Christ and the Madonna are identified with the sun and moon and an eclipse is explained as the outcome of a quarrel between Mother and Son.

Thus the medieval Virgin owed something to paganism and to the obscure immemorial religion of the countryside. But apart altogether from this heritage, her rise to importance within Christianity itself is not surprising. Her emergence from the silent and withdrawn figure of the gospels to the resplendent lady of Chartres Cathedral was the response to a powerful instinct, the people's sense of their need for a mediator between themselves and Christ, just as Christ Himself had suffered to be a mediator between themselves and God. In organised theology and in the organised church the idea of a God of Justice sometimes overshadows the idea of a God of Love. Medieval theology was not a jocund art and the thought of that perpetual damnation, which all but the few had merited, was forever before its eyes. "All these stories," says Dr. Coulton of the Mary Miracles, "aimed at the humanizing of a creed which in the hands of formal theologians and dialecticians

[1] Briffault, *The Mothers*, (1927), III, 182-3.

had grown too inhuman. How could the ordinary man—nay, even the ordinary monk—face the awful implications of the orthodox logic?"[1] Mary was more powerful than the saints and less awful than God; as His mother she had a quite peculiar influence with Christ; and her position between man and his maker, as the middle ages pictured it, is exactly expressed by St. Bernard, when he says that Christ desires us to have everything through Mary. "Christ", he explains "is indeed given as mediator to sinful man, recoiling in terror before God the Father; but the divine Majesty of Christ also awes the sinner, and he therefore seeks an intercessor with Him. Flee to Mary, whose pure humanity the Son also honours. The Son hears the Mother, the Father the Son; this ladder for the sinner is my whole hope."[2] It was a no less natural instinct which made medieval men and women sometimes raise her to something higher than a step in the ladder and see her not less majestic than God Himself. "Imperatrix supernorum, Superatrix infernorum", (as Adam of St. Victor called her), "Coeli regina", even "Templum Trinitatis", she becomes (in the eyes of the untutored people at least) the most important figure in their faith. Christ shrinks to a tiny smiling infant in her arms, and if one theme may be held to typify and sum up the popular religion of the middle ages it is the Coronation of the Virgin.

The medieval Virgin, however, owed something to other forces beside Paganism and Christianity; she was in part a reflection of the characteristic social

[1] Coulton, *Five Centuries of Religion* (1923), I, 156.

[2] Quoted in Moeller, *History of the Christian Church*, tr. Rutherford, II, 334.

background of the middle ages themselves. There was much that was feudal and chivalrous in the conception which men formed of her and in the devotion which they paid to her. The court of heaven was very like a feudal court in their eyes, with all the saints for barons and Mary herself for queen. The idea receives its most specific expression, perhaps, from the pen of a Franciscan, who wrote a book of *exempla* in the fourteenth century: "We ought", he says, "to imitate the man who has incurred the King's anger. What does he do? He goes secretly to the Queen and promises a present, then to the earls and barons and does the same, then to the freemen of the household and lastly to the footmen. So when we have offended Christ we should first go to the Queen of heaven and offer her, instead of a present, prayers, fasting, vigils and alms; then she like a mother, will come between thee and Christ, the father who wishes to beat us, and she will throw the cloak of her mercy between the rod of punishment and us and soften the king's anger against us. Afterwards we should go to the earls and barons, i.e., the apostles and ask them to intercede for us; then to the knights and esquires, i.e., martyrs and confessors; then to the ladies of the Queen's chamber, i.e., the women saints; and lastly to the footmen, i.e., the poor, for the poor should be persuaded by gifts of alms to intercede for us with Christ."[1]

Moreover, the conception of the Virgin was not merely feudal; it was tinged also with that chivalrous romance which appears in the songs of the troubadours and in the great epics of the day. In later Provençal

[1] Little, *Studies in English Franciscan History* (1917), p. 149.

poetry all the characteristic formulas of the love lyric are used to celebrate the Virgin and it has even been held by some critics that Rudel's *princesse lointaine* was no lady of Tripoli but the Virgin herself, on whom his mystical devotion was lavished. "These tales", as Evelyn Underhill has said of the miracles, "bring us to the Courts of Paradise, but the atmosphere is still that of the Courts of Love." There is all the spirit of chivalry in the story of the blessed knight Walter of Birbeck, who on his way to a tournament, turned aside to pray to Our Lady in a chapel and became so lost in prayer that he missed all the jousting; but when three masses were over and he rode on to the tournament, he was met by shouts of applause from the other knights and learned that he had performed marvellous feats, taking all the prizes and the prisoners; and he knew that it was the Blessed Virgin, lance in hand, who had taken his place in the lists. How charming, too, in the tale of how St Thomas of Canterbury found himself, while still a scholar at Paris, among a company of his fellow students, graceless young scamps, all boasting of their sweethearts. Thomas, young and vainglorious and not to be outdone, announced: "She whom I call sweetheart is fairest of all; for there is no woman in all France to compare with her in beauty and loving-kindness". In truth he spoke of the Virgin, but the other students laughed at him, because they knew that he had no mistress, and all haled out their love gages and demanded to see his; and Thomas had none to show. Then he withdrew, much abashed, and in his oratory besought pardon from the Virgin for his deception, whereupon she appeared to him and

gave him a golden casket containing a chasuble and bade him show it to his companions in token of the troth between them. It was surely a polished clerk from Henry II's literary court who first bethought him of that story; as it was surely a homely mother of sons, looking otherwise upon the Virgin, who first told the tale of how the heavenly mother darned that same St. Thomas's hair breeches for him while he slept.

This romantic conception of the Virgin had its other side. For, like the lady of chivalry, she could be (as the miracle-tellers knew) a jealous and exacting mistress to her lovers and she brooked no earthly rival. There is an old and sombre folk legend called the Ring given to Venus (Prosper Merimée has used it in his *conte* "La Vénus d'Ille") which the middle ages appropriated to the Virgin. A young man jestingly betroths himself to a statue of the goddess by placing a ring upon its finger and the statue's hand closes upon the ring; some time later he marries a bride, but the jealous statue enters the bridal chamber to claim its lover and the cold nuptials end in death. This, perhaps, is the origin of the large class of miracles known as the Mary and Bridegroom series. There are a great many variants,[1] but the motif is always the same: the Virgin regards any man who has sworn devotion to her as her betrothed and resists with vigour the rivalry of an earthly lady. In one of these tales a young clerk in minor orders, long devoted to her service, is obliged by his family to leave his career and take a wife. But in the midst of his wedding feast comes Our Lady, more than a little irate with her faithless lover.

[1] See Herolt No. XXVII below.

Iréement li prent à dire
La Mère au Roy de paradis:
'Di-moi, di-moi, tu qui jadis
M'amoies tant de tout ton cuer,
Porquoi m'as-tu jeté puer?
Di-moi, di-moi, où eſt dont cèle
Qui plus de moi bone eſt et bèle? . . .
Porquoi, porquoi, las durfeus,
Las engignez, las décuez,
Me lais pour une lasse fame,
Qui sui du ciel Royne et Dame?
Enne fais-tu trop mauvais change,
Qui tu par une fame eſtrange
Me laisses, qui par amors t'amoie
Et jà ou ciel t'apareilloie
En mes chambres un riche lit
Par couchier t'ame à grant délit?
Trop par as faites grant merveilles.
S'autrement toſt ne te conseilles,
Ou ciel serra tes lis deffaiz,
Et en la flamme d'enfer faiz.[1]

('Angrily the Mother of the King of Paradise speaks to him. "Tell, tell me, thou that once didſt love me with all thy heart, why haſt thou now caſt me aside? Tell me, tell me, where is she who is kinder and fairer than I? Why, why, miserable, misled, deceived wretch, hast thou for a wretched woman left me, that am the Queen and Lady of heaven? Haſt thou not made an ill exchange, that for a ſtrange woman haſt left me, that did love thee with true love, for even now in heaven, have I dressed for thee a rich bed in my chamber, whereon to reſt thy soul in great bliss? Thou has done too much! And if thou doſt not speedily change thy mind, thy bed shall be unmade in heaven and made up in the flames of hell inſtead." ')

So the clerk climbs out of his bridal chamber at midnight and immures himself in a hermitage. In another version a young knight given over to tourneys and hunting and to the company of ladies, is deeply in love with one who will have nothing to do with him. A friendly abbot counsels him to seek help from Our

[1] Gautier de Coincy, *Miracles de la Sainte Vèrge*, ed Poquet (1857), p. 637.

Lady. For a year he denies himself all pleasures and says a Rosary to her daily; at the end of the year, happy at the thought of attaining his desire, he goes hunting. Losing his way, he enters a chapel to say once more his rosary to the Queen of Heaven and there confides in her the beauty of his lady, so fair of speech and face, so lovely and so desired; and suddenly behold the Virgin, "par sa grant débonnaireté, par sa cortoise courtoisie" (is it not the very language of polite society and courtly love?) appearing to the young man and asking him in a tone of great graciousness, not unmixed with some anxiety, "Fair sweet friend, is this lady who has made thee to sigh thus, more beautiful than I?" There is the usual end; the Virgin offers him the choice between his earthly love and her own favours in heaven, and he enters a monastery, to die in the odour of sanctity at the end of the year.[1]

Compact of all these different elements, pagan, Christian and feudal, the cult of the Virgin grew throughout the middle ages. Its evidences are plain for all to see in hymn and in cathedral, but no one who has not wandered in the byways of medieval literature, or peered into the detail of carving or painting on mirror back or manuscript, can quite understand how intimate and all pervading that worship was and how closely it was interwoven into the texture of everyday life. It is true that kings gave the lead (it probably began at the Byzantine court) and that learned doctors organised the cult and worked out its doctrinal justification; but beyond all this it was essentially popular. In this matter the people ran away from the

[1] Gautier de Coincy, *op. cit.*, pp. 531ff.

church, which followed panting in their rear ; and the medieval Virgin is essentially their creation, a figure of popular folklore even more than a figure of doctrinal devotion, and much more than a figure of cold history. " The middle ages ", says Dr. Coulton, " thus made for themselves a new Redeemer, endowed with all the qualities that they needed most and fashioned with every poetic liberty which the reticence of the four evangelists permitted. If the early Christians had known more about the Mother of the Lord the medieval mind would have known far less. There grew up practically a Gospel of Mary, with all those details that are lacking in the four Gospels, and Acts of Mary, to supply all that is not said about her in the Acts."[1] Above all there grew up those hundreds of stories, passed from mouth to mouth and in version after version, which we know as the Miracles of Our Lady and of which the collection by Herolt, which is here printed, is one of the most complete.

There are many collections of these miracles, but the people did not depend upon the written word for their diffusion. The very absence of popular education tightened the Virgin's hold upon her worshippers. There were not then books to bring them hundreds of new heroines every year ; they heard these stories by word of mouth and repeated them in the long, dark evenings and always she was their most popular heroine. Every shrine had its own cycle of miracles and there exist many groups of stories, those variations on the same theme, which are the invariable mark of oral transmission. Thus one may trace the Ave Maria

[1] *op. cit.*, I, 155.

group (on the merits of repeating the Angelic Salutation),[1] the Rosary group (on the motif that the Aves of the faithful are turned to roses),[2] the Mary and Bridegroom group (in which a young man vows himself to the Virgin and is prevented by her from contracting an earthly marriage),[3] the Nun who loved the World (in which she takes the place of a nun who leaves her convent with a lover, until the sinner returns repentent)[4], the Star of the Sea (in which she calms the storm),[5] the Mantle of Mercy (in which her cloak shields her devotees from death by fire or water),[6] the *Judæus Rubescat* legend (one version of which is found in Chaucer's "Prioresses Tale").[7] These tales were sometimes written down in bare outline, as we have them in Herolt's *Promptuarium* and other collections of *exempla* for the use of preachers, which aim at giving the plot of a story, which the teller can adorn with detail and with local colour as he will. But the miracles of the Virgin were also a favourite literary theme and in the hands of the poets they shine like the reliquaries which enshrined her relics, set with a hundred jewels of speech. Such is the collection of miracle plays called *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame*,[8] such the narratives in rhymed French verse made by Gautier de Coincy in the thirteenth century, such the exquisite "Prioresses Tale" in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and such the collection written down by

[1] See below, Nos. LVII, LXVIII, LXX-LXXVI; and for the Salve Regina, LXXXVII-XCLI.

[2] No. LXIV. [3] No. XXVII. [4] No. XXV.

[5] No. XL. [6] No. XXXIX. [7] No. LXVI.

[8] *Miracles de Nostre Dame par Personnages*, ed. Gaston Paris and Ulysse Robert (Soc. des Anc. Textes Français, 1898-1900), 8 vols.

Jean Mielot, secretary to Philip the Good Duke of Burgundy.[1] It is from these miracles that the modern reader may form the clearest impression of the Virgin, as she appeared to the popular mind in the middle ages.

Out of these stories there grew up a very well defined picture of the Virgin. Her character, her likes and dislikes, were as well-known as those of any earthly queen. It was understood that she preferred some people to others. Soldiers, for instance, she loved, and she was quite at home upon the field of battle. The Byzantine emperors always invoked her aid when they marched against the paynims and she accompanied the Western armies when they went upon Crusades. Joinville tells how a man possessed of a devil was taken to the shrine of Our Lady of Tortosa (in Syria) to be cured, and how the devil answered: "Our Lady is not here: she is in Egypt, helping the king of France and the Christians who will come to land this day, they on foot against the paynims all ahorse." No man could contend that St. Louis' crusade was anything but a failure, but this did not disturb men's faith in the Virgin. "And be assured," adds Joinville, "that she did help us and she would have helped us more, if we had not angered her, her and her Son, as I have told you before."[2] She was pre-eminent in siege warfare and once at least defended her own city of Byzantium against the Moslems, standing with her host of Virgins before the walls,

[1] Mielot, *Miracles de Nostre Dame*, ed. from the MS. in the Bodleian by G. F. Warner (Roxburghe Club, 1885).

[2] Joinville, *Hist. de Saint Louis.*, ed. N. de Wailly, p. 252.

catching the weapons in the folds of her cloak and hurling them back against the infidel. In 911 her tunic, displayed upon the ramparts as a banner, saved the town of Chartres from the assaults of the Northmen; but she did not lose her special characteristic of divine pity even in battle, and when the men of Chartres, rejoicing in the inability of their enemy (who had been stricken with blindness) either to fight or to flee, began a pitiless massacre, the Virgin, in high displeasure, seized her tunic from their midst and disappeared with it. These victories over the heathen are perhaps not inappropriate, but the primal instinct which bids man drag his god into his battles acts without reference to the cause at stake, and she was invoked in the fratricidal quarrels of Christians too. "On every battle-field of Europe", says Henry Adams, "for at least five-hundred years, Mary was present, leading both sides."[1] He has collected a long list of battlecries which invoked her help—Notre Dame St. Denis Monjoie for the royal hosts of France and Notre Dame Bourgogne for the rebel Duke of Burgundy, Notre Dame Guesclin for the Constable and Notre Dame Couci for the sires de Couci, famous in romance. They bear testimony at least to the devotion of the knightly class.

But although the Virgin was ever gracious to chivalry and to great bishops of the church, it was the common people that she loved the best, poor clerks, humble monks and nuns (the lower ranks of the ecclesiastical heirarchy) and simple laymen, jongleurs

[1] Henry Adams, *Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres* (1913), p. 94. Everyone should read this delightful book, especially the chapters on the Virgin and on the miracles.

and thieves and poor mothers of erring sons. Mothers indeed, took all manner of liberties with her, removing her child from her arms and taking Him away, until she should bring them back their own, who had perhaps been loſt, or imprisoned for some crime.[1] Indeed, she was the people's mother ; she underſtood mothers and she underſtood sons. The people knew that though she could command the fineſt buildings in the world for her churches and though the loveliеſt carvings in wood and ſtone and ivory, the loveliеſt paintings on glass or on vellum, the loveliеſt songs of praise were at her disposal, yet she would not disdain their humble offerings and meek and ignorant service. She did as fair a miracle for the poor ſtreet acrobat, who nightly tumbled and did his tricks before her shrine, as she did for the great bishop St. Bon of Clermont, who said mass for her and all the hoſts of heaven. The tumbler had turned monk in the Abbey of Clairvaux and, too ignorant to join in the services, determined to praise the Virgin in the only way he knew. But one night the Abbot became suspicious and hid in the crypt, and when the tumbler dropped exhauſted at the ſtatue's feet, he saw the Virgin herself step down from the pedeſtal and with a towel fan her ſtrange worshipper and wipe the sweat from his brow ; and henceforth the ſtreet acrobat was honoured above all the moſt learned monks of the house.

The Virgin, indeed, liked being amused and she had a very kindly eye for artists, on whose behalf she performed some of her beſt miracles. There was

[1] e.g. Herolt, Nos. XIV, XV, XVI.

another jongleur (but of a more reputable class), the troubadour Pierre de Siglar, who entertained her with his best songs at her shrine at Rocamadour, and in return begged her, if he had pleased her, to give him one of her candles to light him to supper; and thrice her candle descended upon his viol, much to the fury of the sacristan of the place, who considered troubadours to be shady people and was inclined to put the miracle down to black magic. Then there was the artist who painted Our Lady, more beautiful than the sun, standing above the lintel of a church door, and close to her made a picture of the Devil, which was the very pink and pattern of ugliness, snout and hoofs and horns and all. The Prince of Evil, touched in his vanity, came and remonstrated. "Make me as handsome as I seem to my own people, or it will be the worse for you; and certainly make me handsomer than *that* woman over there." But the painter only made the Devil uglier than ever and put his face under Our Lady's foot, whereupon Satan in a fury hurled himself against the platform, where the painter was working high in the roof and upset it; and as he fell, crying on the Virgin's name, his picture stretched out its beautiful hand and held him safely above the lintel of the door, and her Child held him on the other side, until help came.[1]

But most strange to modern minds appears the Virgin's predilection for the disreputable, though indeed it should not be strange, for in it (running deep and clear) we do but see the love that sat with publicans and sinners. The moral to be drawn from

[1] No. LXXXIII, cp. XXI.

some of her miracles does not seem a very lofty one, laying, as it does, so much ſtress on purely verbal exercises, the recital of the Angelic Salutation outweighing a lifetime of ill-doing. Her moſt unreasonable interferences were made againſt the discipline of her Son's church. All the beſt bishops of the middle ages spent their days trying to combat ignorance and evil-living among their monks and parish clergy, an unequal conflict at the beſt of times, but a hopeless one when the Queen of Heaven might at any time interfere in favour of her own devotees. There is a whole class of miracles, known as the Rosary series, which were almoſt exclusively in favour of ignorant or immoral clerks.[1] Sometimes it is a monk, who has died despised of his convent, because he was too ignorant to learn the offices of the church and could only say the Ave Maria, whereupon she causes five roses to spring from his dead lips for the five letters of her name, and he is henceforth venerated as a saint; sometimes the roses spring from the lips of a clerk who has lived disreputably and died impenitent, but has never forgotten to kneel and weep before her image, whereupon she appears and threatens awful penalties on the clergy, who have buried him outside in a ditch, if they do not dig him up and put him on the beſt place in the cemetery; the point is not that the man is a sinner, but that he is *her* sinner, "son pecheor," as Gautier de Coincy puts it. It was the duty (not always performed) of every bishop to remove ill-educated prieſts, in the beſt intereſts of church discipline and of their parishioners; but this is how she speaks to an

[1] Nos. LXIV, LXV, XCIII.

exceptionally conscientious bishop, who has removed one of these ignorami :

Ce saches tu certainement
Se tu bien matinet demain
Ne repèles mon chapelain
A son servise et a s'onneur,
L'ame de toi a deshonneur
Ainz xxx jours départira
De ton cors en enfer ira.[1]

(Know thou this for sure, if thou doſt not to-morrow morning very early recall my chaplain to his service and honour, within thirty days thine own soul shall in great dishonour depart from thy body and go to hell.)

Indeed it looks very much as though the Virgin discouraged learning and the high value set upon pious ignorance in the miracles is perhaps a further teſtimony to the popular nature of her cult. There is another tale, known as the Divine Electuary, in which a certain monk, who was a great scholar and a skilled physician and herbaliſt, found himself less well able to bear the rigours of monaſtic life than were his brethren. Seeking the reason for this he saw one night in a dream the Virgin, bearing a precious electuary in a pyx and placing a little of it in the mouth of each of the sleeping monks. But when the herbaliſt begged for some of the precious medicine she replied : " Physician, heal thyself. You spend so much time over your herbs that you ought to be able to look after your own health, but these brothers think only of praising me and in return I care for them." Consequently when the monk awoke he caſt away all his jars and potions and powders and swore to ſtudy such things no longer

[1] Gautier de Coincy, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

This miracle cannot have encouraged the art of medicine in monasteries.

Indeed the kind of people this divine and most imperious Lady brought into heaven must have given rise to endless difficulties, even in that many-mansioned realm. A list of some of the sinners whom she smuggled into eternal bliss or rescued from the just reward of their iniquities on earth, is very significant of her function as the Sinner's Friend. There is the nun who left her convent with a lover, returning years later, after leading a very loose life, to find that the Virgin had taken her place as Sacristan during her absence.[1] There is the abbess, who bore a child to her clerk and for whom the Virgin not only acted as midwife but hid the infant, so that the abbess's fame was unblemished when her bishop came on a visitation.[2] There are the matron and monk, who eloped together with the treasures of his monastery and of her husband, and invoked the Virgin so piteously when caught and locked up, that she had to let them loose and conceal their crime by an elaborate imposture. There is the drunken sacristan from before whose wavering footsteps she drove away in turn a bull, a dog, and a lion (all of them the Father of Mischief) as he returned to his cell after his potations.[3] There is the other monk, who was in the habit of leaving his monastery secretly every night and returning in time for matins and who was drowned one night on the way back and wrested from triumphant devils by Mary, on the ground that

[1] This is the famous tale of Beatrice the Sacristan, which has inspired almost as many modern as medieval writers. See No. XXV.

[2] No. XXIV. [3] No. IV.

he had all along preserved the habit of praying to her. There are all the wicked clerks and monks whose Aves turned to roses on their lips, when they were dead and all men thought them damned. There is the thief, who always remembered to say an Ave to her "when he went thieving" and who could not be hanged, because she ſtood beneath the gallows for three nights and held up his feet with her white hands.[1] There is Theophilus, who sold his soul to the devil.[2] There is Theodobert, who murdered her son-in-law and was sentenced to be burned, but was saved by the Virgin, to whom she prayed on the way to execution and who prevented the flames from touching her. There is the inceſtuous Empress who drowned her baby. There is the wife of the King of Portugal, who cut off the head of her husband's seneschal and burned her lady cousin in bed. There is the ignorant and avaricious villein, who only knew one half of the Ave Maria, but won salvation for saying it on Sundays. There is the robber knight, who took no heed of God or man, but always saluted her.[3]

It would almoſt seem as if Mary were determined to remove the ſtigma that all the pleasant people go to hell and all the dull and eſtimable to heaven. There is a familiar passage in the charming ſtory of *Aucassin and Nicolete*, which is very characteriſtic of the scepticism which went side by side with devotion in the Age of Faith and is boldly put in the mouth of the hero :

To Paradise goes no one but such people as I will tell you of. There go old prieſts and old cripples and the maimed, who all day and all

[1] No. V. [2] No. XLII. [3] No. LVII.

night crouch before altars and in old crypts and are clothed in old worn-out capes and old tattered rags; who are naked and footbare and sore; who die of hunger and want and misery. These go to Paradise; with them I have nothing to do; but to Hell I am willing to go. For to Hell go the fine scholars and the fair knights who die in tourneys and in glorious wars; and the good men-at-arms and the well-born. With them will I gladly go. And there go the fair courteous ladies, who have two or three lovers besides their lords. And the gold and the silver go there and the vair and the grey; and there go the harpers and the jongleurs and the kings of the world.

In the middle of one of Mary's own miracles comes a similar charge, though Gautier de Coincy has taken the precaution of putting it in the mouth of devils:

Les bèles dames de grant pris
Qui traynant vont ver et gris,
Roys, roynes, dus et contesses,
En enfer viènent â granz presses;
Mais ou ceil vont près tout â fait
Tort et boçu et contrefait.
Ou ciel va toute la ringaille;
Le grain avons et Diex la paille.[1]

(The fair ladies of great riches, who go trailing their vair and their grey fur, kings, queens, dukes and countesses, come to hell in great crowds. But to heaven go the crooked and the hunchbacks and the maimed, to heaven go the all riff-raff; we get the grain and God the ſtraw.)

But the Virgin was changing all that. She ſtood for faith and not for good works, for love and not for juſtice. The medieval man felt that with her he always had a chance; he had only to believe in her and she would not desert him; if she could not get him into Paradise by the door she would smuggle him in at the window, as she once promised one of her adorers, who had unfortunately earned the disfavour

[1] Gautier de Coincy, *op. cit.*, p. 622.

of St. Peter, by taking oil from his lamp to replenish her's.

It must be admitted that the Virgin of the miracles was somewhat unscrupulous in the use of this supreme power of hers. She was of the middle ages not only in her relations with her lovers; she had the feudal magnate's loyalty to her men. For the legal rights or wrongs of a case she cared not at all, and there was nothing she liked better than cheating the Devil of his due. A wall-painting in an Oxfordshire church shows her at the last judgment, when St. Michael weighs the soul with its few good deeds against its heavy sins, casting her rosary upon the balance and turning it in favour of the quaking soul.[1] It is true that in this case the devil also is cheating, by pulling at the beam to make it lean on his side, but in most of her recorded miracles the law is decidedly on the side of the evil one. All the devils saw their worst enemy in the Virgin; they called her "that woman" (*illa mulier*), which, indeed, is nothing to what she called them upon occasion—wicked gluttons, murderous thieves and stinking beasts for example, all in the same miracle.[2] According to the medieval idea there was always a dispute between devils and angels for each man's soul when he died, and many of these wordy duels are reported with circumstantial detail by Gautier de Coincy. The evil ones never minded an appeal to the God of justice in case of a difference of opinion, but they could not bear an appeal to Mary, for they knew that whatever a soul might get of her it

[1] Compare No. I.

[2] Gautier de Coincy, *op. cit.*, p. 469.

was not juſtice. They grumbled unendingly both at her feminine influence with the Supreme Judge, and at her feminine incapacity for fair play.

Font li Déables " De ceſt plait
Mal por mal, assez miex nous pleſt
Que nous aillons au jugement
Li haut jugeur qui ne ment.
C'au plait n'au jugement sa Mère
De droit jugier eſt trop avère ;
Mais Dieu nous juge si adroit
Plainement nous leſt noſtre droit.
Sa Mère juge en tel manière
Qu'elle nous met touz jors arrière
Quant nous cuidons eſtre devant.
Ele nous va touz jours grévant.
. . . . .
En ciel et en terre eſt plus Dame
Par un petit que Diex ne soit.
Il l'aimme tant et tant la croit,
N'eſt riens qu'elle face ne die
Qu'il desveille ne contredie.
Quant qu'elle veut li fait acroire
S'elle disoit la pie eſt noire
Et l'eue trouble eſt toute clere.
Si diroit-il voir, dit ma Mère.[1]

(Say the devils : " In this lawsuit, since it is a choice of evils, we had beſt appeal to the judgment of the high judge who lieth not. His mother will not judge aright in any plea ; but God judges us so fairly that he leaves us all our due. His mother judges in such a way that we always find ourselves down when we think that we are up. She is always harming us somehow. . . . In heaven and on earth she is the ruler rather than God. He so loves her and believes in her that he will not contradict or disavow anything that she says or does. She makes Him believe anything she likes. If she said that black was white and muddy water clear, He would say ' It is true ; My Mother says so.' ")

According to the devils she was faſt emptying hell by these means :

[1] Gautier de Coincy, *op. cit.*, pp. 464-5.

N'eſt si péchiérre homme ne fame
Nous perdons tout par cèle Dame,
Se s'aide, quiert et porchace.
Tout son vouloir de Dieu ne face.
Il eſt tout fait quant qu'èle dit.
Nus ne puet meſtre contredit.
De clers, de moines, de nonnains,
De chevaliers et de vilains
Fuſt enfers plains jusqu'à la gueule,
S'elle ne fuſt treſtoute seule.
Par li sommes deshérité
Et esseillié et bareté,
Par li sommes vil et despit.[1]

("There is no man or woman however sinful that we do not lose through that Lady, if they seek and purchase her aid. She does juſt what she likes with God. Everything is done as she says and we cannot complain. With clerks and monks and nuns, knights and villeins, hell would be full to the jaws, but for her alone. By her we are disinherited, chased away and cheated, by her we are become vile and despised.")

Moreover, juſt as the feudal magnate required firſt of all loyalty to himself and second only loyalty to his overlord, so a complete devotion to her sometimes outweighed in Mary's eyes a very cavalier treatment of the Trinity. There is a certain undercurrent of wiſtfulness in the words of Chriſt in a little miracle quoted by Henry Adams. "A clerk, truſting more in the Mother than in the Son, never ſtopped repeating the Angelic Salutation as his only prayer. Once, as he said again the Ave Maria, the Lord appeared to him and said: 'My Mother thanks you much for all the salutations that you make her; but ſtill you should not forget to salute me also: *tamen et me salutare memento*."[2] Moſt remarkable of all is the hiſtory of the young

[1] Gautier de Coincy, *op. cit.*, p, 496. See below, No. XLIV.
[2] Henry Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

man, who wants to borrow a large sum of money from a Jew. The Jew says to him, "I will help you, but you must deny God the Father." The young man does so. "Not enough yet," says the Jew. "You must deny Jesus Christ." The young man does so. "Not enough yet, you must deny the Holy Ghost." The young man does so. "Nearly enough," says the Jew. "But lastly you must deny the Virgin Mary. "By heaven, no," says the young man, "that will I never do, for she has ever been kind and courteous to me." Nor can the threats of the Jew move him. Whereupon the image of the Virgin bows its head to the blasphemer and he becomes rich beyond his dreams, and in due course goes to heaven, conducted by the Virgin's self.[1]

Enough has been written, perhaps, to show the mixture of intense reverence and intense familiarity with which the men and women of the middle ages regarded the Virgin Mary. The reverence is written plainly in the Virgin of the cathedrals, sitting throned and crowned in majesty in the great windows of Chartres, or in the Virgin of Adam of Saint Victors' hymns, or in Dante's beautiful invocation, which Chaucer translated in his "Seconde Nonne Tale":

> Thou mayde and mooder, doghter of thy sone,
> Thou welle of mercy, sinful soules cure
> In whome that god, for bountee, chees to wone,
> Thou humble and heigh over every creature,
> Thou nobledest so ferforth our nature,
> That no desdeyn the maker had of kinde,
> His sone in blode and flesh to clothe and winde.

[1] No. XCV is a version of this tale.

The familiarity is written equally clearly in the miracles of the Virgin. It is plain that what we have here is not an ecclesiastical but a popular creation. The best brains of the scholastics buttressed the cult of the Virgin with eloquence and argument from another side; they were like the kings bringing gold and frankincense and myrrh. But the people are the shepherds, and the miracles are their humble gifts. They know what sort of mother and helper and ever-present friend they needed and they moulded her in that image; that is why so many of her miracles seem to-day familiar to the point of irreverence. They wanted something more than their deserts in the next world, so they set their faith on a woman, who acted on a kind of divine intuition rather than by the canons of reason and side by side with the heavenly court, where cases were given justice and no more, held (as Adams puts it) "a kind of jurisdiction in equity". The Virgin of the miracles does not care a snap of her fingers for law; the very devils in hell understand it better than she and do not scruple to say so. She has no idea of fair play; the whole heirarchy of heaven bows to her caprices; the angels usher in her sinners among the saints and the very damned are wrested from hell; but she never exercises her prerogative save in mercy and she is always on the side of the angels in the death-bed dispute.

The instinct of the people was a just one. If behind all the superficiality and irresponsibility of the miracles we look more closely at the Virgin of the middle ages, we shall perceive that she does represent the deepest and most essential side of the Christian religion, the

insistence on faith, the power of love to blot away sin, above all the infinite mercy. "Let him deny your mercy", said St. Bernard, "Who can say that he has ever asked for it in vain", and against her divine importunity her Son cannot remain stern. One of the most touching of the miracles shows her moving the Christ child about in her arms, to make Him turn his averted face towards her that she may the better plead with Him,[1] and others show her interceding with Him, not for this or that sinner, but for the whole human race, so that drops of sweat roll off her image, because she is holding back His arm, outstretched to destroy the world.[2] It is for this quality and because she mirrors for us the real religion of the people in the middle ages that the Virgin of the miracles deserves to be studied; and no one could study her and remain unaffected by the naive and familiar charm of the conception, which is clear even in the unadorned outline of Herolt's little *exempla*.

EILEEN POWER.

[1] No. XLVI.

[2] No. XI. Cp. No. IX.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Broadly speaking, the numerous collections of tales composed or compiled in the Middle Ages originated in the preachers' need of *exempla*, i.e. illustrative stories drawn from lay as well as ecclesiastical sources.

"The first somewhat systematic use of *exempla* (although taken exclusively from the legends of the Saints) is to be found in the *Homilies on the Gospels* of Gregory I (before 604). These homilies, forty in number, were addressed to the people, and pronounced in the various basilicas of Rome" (Crane, *Exempla of Jacques de Vitry*: Folk Lore Society, 1890, Introd. p. lviii).

Both the *Homilies* and the *Dialogues* of Gregory furnished later preachers with an abundant store of *exempla*, but the use of the latter in sermons did not become frequent until the end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, the *sermones vulgares* of Jacques de Vitry, widely known and popular as they were, not leading at once to a general adoption of either the sermon or the *exemplum*.

The real impetus in sermon-making came with the rise of the two travelling orders, the Franciscans and Dominicans, and the example set by both, and especially by the latter, the *Ordo Praedicatorum*.

Their preaching being addressed to the common people was necessarily popular in character, and

needed the introduction of illustrative tales to catch and hold the attention of their hearers. In consequence, collections of sermons and of *exempla* to be used in them, drawn from many other sources than the lives of the saints, began to make their appearance; and of such none were more popular in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries than those of the Dominican preacher, Johannes Herolt, called Discipulus.

His *Sermones de Tempore et de Sanctis* (i.e. for use throughout the year on Sundays and Saints' Days), followed by a *Promptuarium* (or storehouse) of *Exempla*, was, in the sixteenth century, the best known of all such collections, no less than forty-eight editions of it having been issued by 1520.

In the Prologue to that *Promptuarium* Herolt cites without acknowledgment a passage from the preface of the *Alphabetum Narrationum* of Étienne de Besançon on the use of *exempla* in sermons, and refers to the example of St Dominic.

It is the second of his two *promptuaria*, the *Promptuarium Discipuli de Miraculis Beate Marie Virginis*, a special collection of one hundred miracles performed by the Virgin, which has been translated in this book.

Of Johannes Herolt, Discipulus, little is known except his works. A Dominican Friar of Basel, he flourished during the first half of the fifteenth century. The probable date of our *Promptuarium* is 1435-40. Herolt himself says as a description of his work: "Here end those sermons founded on various utterances of the Saints and on a great number of books, and they are entitled 'Sermons of a Learner' because they are not refined compositions and deductions

such as you might expect from a teacher, but only the plain words that a learner would use."

The reference here is to his more important work, the *Sermones de Tempore, etc.*, in which there were 114 sermons and forty-eight *exempla*. Besides the *Sermones de B.V.M.* and the *Promptuarium* here translated, he was the author of *Sermones in Quadragesima* (daily Lenten sermons, forty-seven in number), *Sermones super Epistolas*, and *Liber de Eriditione Christi Fidelium*.

It is noteworthy that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there is no mention of the use of *exempla* in works on sermon-making, such as Guibert de Nogent's *Liber quo Ordine Sermo Fieri Debeat*, Humbertus de Romanis' *De Eriditione Praedicatorum*, and Peter Cantor's *Verbum Abbreviatum*; there is, however, in Alan de Lille's treatise *De Arte Praedicatoria*, ch. i, where he says "The preacher should use *exempla* to drive home his meaning, because people are more accustomed to learn through concrete instances." Jacques de Vitry, too, says: "'Many are spurred by example who are unmoved by precept,' and the practice of Gregory and Dominic in this respect is adduced by Étienne de Besançon, Étienne de Bourbon, and Johannes Gobii in the *Scala Celi*.

One might expect that collections of *exempla* relating exclusively to Our Lady would increase *pari passu* with the evergrowing popularity of her worship, which, advancing more slowly in the history of the church between the fifth and eleventh centuries, quickened into rapid progress after the end of the twelfth century.

And so it is that, although before the twelfth century solitary Mary legends were to be found in various writers, e.g., Gregory of Tours, Peter Damian, and others, there is no authenticated instance of a collection of Mary legends in MS. earlier than the eleventh century. Their vogue began in the second half of the twelfth.

Mussafia, in his *Studien zu den mitteralterlichen Marienlegenden*, gives the results of his examination of a great number of MS collections of Mary legends in European libraries. His inquiry into the relations to one another of the collections and the origins of the separate tales led him to the following highly probable conclusions.

The oldest of all the collections, going back even to the eleventh century but not now extant as a separate whole, is a group of seventeen legends. Both the home and the author of the group are unknown, but the author took his material from the lives of the Saints and from Cloister chronicles. Some of the stories in the group were not originally connected with Mary, or only in conjunction with another Saint, the increasing cult of the Virgin causing in many cases the substitution of her name for that of the Saint originally concerned, e.g. in the story of "The Unchaste Monk of Cologne" St Peter disappears and is replaced by Mary; similarly "Giraldus" was originally a St James miracle. The story of "The Fire in St Michael's" is an instance of a subject taken from monastic chronicles.

This group of seventeen legends became so universally popular as to be found embedded wholly or in

parts in most of the later collections, a great number of which begin with the group's first tale "Hildefonsus". It is designated 'the *Ad laudem* group' because the prologue to it runs *Ad omnipotentis Dei laudem.*

Further, an unknown writer—also in the eleventh century—re-edited some legends of an earlier century, i.e. "The Jew Boy", "Theophilus", "Basil", and the "Childbirth in the Sea", bringing each of these tales into relation with one of the four elements earth, water, fire and air. This little element-group of four is undoubtedly of English origin, but did not win such wide reception as the *Ad laudem* collection.

A third oldest collection is probably that represented by the three MSS. (1) Brit. Mus. Cleop. c. 20, (2) Toulouse 482, and (3) Oxf. Balliol Libr. 240, whose agreement can best be accounted for by postulating a single source for the three MSS.

In later centuries, as the cult of the Virgin grew ever more popular, an ever-increasing number of Mary miracles was collected from earlier writings or written down for the first time. Activity in this work began and grew from the eleventh century onwards. Literary interest, especially in France, supplemented religious feeling in the composition of the later tales of the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries collections. The earlier legends were still repeated, but tended to change their form. They were not merely copied. A bare record of a wonderful event develops in many cases into an interesting tale with an artistic dress.

Not the oldest of these later collections, but the one most widely known, which, crossing from France

into Germany, had dominant influence in the latter country, was that printed by Bernard Pez, from a thirteenth century MS, of the Holy Cross in Lower Austria, which was wrongly attributed by Pez himself to Botho of Priefling near Regensburg. Mussafia in his *Studien* has compared with this standard collection a great number of manuscript and printed collections of Mary legends. The references to the MSS. in the notes at the end of the present translation of Herolt, are as cited by him.

In a few of the miracles Herolt states his authority, but more often does not. Most of them, however, may be traced (1) to Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus Miraculorum* (1240), (2) to Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum Historiale*, (1264) containing forty-three tales, which Vincent probably took from one of the collections of his time (3) to Thomas Cantimpratanus' *De Apibus* (1280). Other origins and identifications of these tales and their variants will be found in the notes.

It will be seen that not often can any one tale be traced to a single original author, as in the case of the Theophilus legend. This may be because some are from cloister-chronicles and others appeared first in sermons, a thorough search of which might reveal the origin of many not yet accounted for.

The numeration of the edition used by me differs somewhat from that of others, because two tales are given, each numbered 3, i.e. "The Woman who Returned to Life because of an Unconfessed Sin" and "Murieldis". The next number is 4, and the last 99, actually one hundred miracles in all being offered. In other editions e.g. Vienna 1622 (apud

Johannen Salis), and that used by Mussafia, 3b is counted as 4, and the following tales numbered accordingly.

The text is occasionally corrupt, but usually not so as to obscure the meaning.

In the preparation of this introduction I have been much helped by T. F. Crane's *Exempla of Jacques de Vitry* and by A. Mussafia's *Studien zu den mitteralterlichen Marienlegenden.*

C.C.S.B.

THE MIRACLES OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Since, to the glory of Almighty God, miracles are often related which the divine power works by means of the Saints, far more should men recall those sweeter than honey that herald the fame of St Mary, Mother of God.

Therefore to ſtrengthen in love for her the hearts of the faithful, I purpoſe gathering from various writings a little work which ſhall be named "Diſcipulus' Store-houſe of the Miracles of the Bleſſed Virgin Mary", ſhowing how the Bleſſed Virgin ſuccours men, women, and children, in life, in death, and after death, in all needs and ſtraits.

Hence, ſaith Bernard: "Let him ſay naught of thy tender heart, O Bleſſed Virgin, who can remember that thou, when called upon, didſt fail him in his need"; and, ſaith Anſelm: "From the beginning of human redemption until now haſt thou ſuccoured all who take ſhelter under thy protection. Wherefore haſt thou won above all God's creatures the right to be and to be called worthieſt of all to receive honour."

I

There was once a Roman Emperor, who had a wife of noble birth and demeanour, and they lived chaſtely together. But it came into the Emperor's mind to go on a visit to the tomb of Chriſt and to the shrines of the Saints. And so, with the consent of the Empress, he entruſted her to the care of his own natural brother.

Now this brother, being a disappointed lover of the Empress, broke out into a violent passion, and made his love known to her. And, after much persecution to which she would by no means yield, in the end she fixed a day on which she promised she would satisfy his desire. But in the meantime she allowed him to build a tower, and arranged to put into it two youths and two maidens to attend upon the brother of the Emperor and to draw up by ropes into the tower everything that was necessary. Now on the day fixed for the Empress and the young man to go up into it privately, when he was rejoicing that he would now gratify his desire, going on before her he entered the tower, but the chaſte lady turned back to her house, and thus the brother of the Emperor was caught and kept in the tower.

Under the Empress Rome remained at peace until the Emperor returned to his own ; and, hearing after five years of his coming the Empress rejoiced exceedingly and ordered the nobles and the chief of the clergy to go out with her to meet him and the villages to be fittingly decorated, and she let the brother of the

Emperor out of the tower to go and meet his brother. And he, going out to meet his brother ahead of the Empress, grossly slandered her, for, being asked by his brother why he was so pale, he replied with tears: "My very dear brother, that wicked harlot, your wife, has been in the habit of committing adultery with many men, even trying to draw me into sin with her. No one has been refused her embraces since you went away, and, because I could not endure this, she shut me up in a tower."

Hearing this, the Emperor was so stricken to the heart with grief that he fell to the ground and for an hour lay there, until, comforted by the commiserations of those about him, he arose and mounted his horse. Now in the castle the Empress with a great company set out to meet her husband, but, when she was about to embrace him, he struck her hard in the face, and she fell down in a swoon. Then calling two of his servants, he said to them: "Since there is no contending with a harlot, go, take her to some out-of-the-way island to be beheaded."

When they had come to the place where she was to be beheaded, in admiration of her beauty they said to one another: "Let us enjoy her embraces before she is slain, for there is not a more beautiful woman in the world." And, as they rushed upon her, she casting up her eyes to heaven, in mournful tones loudly besought God to look down upon her, and begged His Bride, the Holy Mary, to give her aid.

Now a certain noble, a great man, who had gone on a pilgrimage to the home of the Apostles and to the holy places, was journeying not far off with a company of

much people. Hearing the cries of the woman, and seeing foul slaves mishandling so noble-looking a lady, they rescued her from their hands, and she asked the lord to take her as handmaid under his protection without harm to her honour. He, willingly consenting to her prayer, took her to his own country, where his wife received her with honour, and committed to her for education her only son, and she, taking the boy, gave him greater care than if he had been her own son.

There was a certain knight, brother of that lord, who, desiring to gain her love, wooed her with wheedling words and strong enticement. She replied that she had a chaste liking for the man through her love for the lord, whose brother he was, but altogether refused to wed him; wherefore the wretch began to plot in his mind how he might destroy her.

And so in the dead of night he went to the place where she was sleeping with the child, and, after cutting the throat of his brother's little son with a knife, went off, leaving the knife in the hand of the woman. When therefore the blood of the murdered child ran down over the bed and soaked the woman's body, she awoke and in excessive terror called out. The father and mother, quickly rising from their bed, came with a light to their son. and when they saw him with his throat cut and a knife in the hand of the woman, the grief that seized upon them and the whole household, can hardly be described. Lastly came that most wicked murderer pouring out false tears and saying to his brother: "You have brought here a harlot who was condemned to be put to death in

another country because of her many crimes; let her therefore be given up to the flames." But that great nobleman and his wife would not allow her to be put to death, but gave her to shipmen at a port of the neareſt sea to take away to another people's country.

And so the Empress went with the servants to the ship and entered it weeping. Now when the shipmen had sailed for a long time on the sea, observing her beauty, they asked her to give herself up to them; but she besought them for the love of Chriſt and of the Blessed Virgin Mary not to do her violence. And they, at that earneſt prayer, left her on a certain rock that ſtood up before them.

There, after passing the whole night sleepless and in tears, worn out with faſting for three days, she fell asleep. And there appeared to her Mary, the Glorious Queen of Heaven, saying: "Gather the herb that is under your head and to whatsoever lepers you give it to drink in the name of the Lord, they shall become whole."

Awaking, therefore, from her vision in great joy, the woman gathered the herb and, drawing off her leathern gloves from her hands, filled them with it. Now at the third hour shipmen sent by God, as they sailed near that rock, were hailed by her, and put into land. And, seeing her ſtately bearing and having compassion on her, they took her into the ship and carried her to a port.

On landing from the ship, she found a leper, to whom she gave some of the herb to drink, and at once he was healed; and the fame of her went out far and wide. Then she came to that country in which was

that wicked man, now become a leper, who had slain his brother's son in the bosom of this lady. Being brought to him through his many prayers, but unrecognised by the people of the house, she was earneſtly entreated by the brother of that leper to succour him for any reward she chose to have. She promised she would help him, if he would confess all his sins in the presence of herself, his brother, and his brother's wife. He in his confession told of many sins but concealed the crime which he had committed againſt her. The woman then said that her medicine could do him no good if he hid his sin. Then said his brother: "Open your heart, and, if you have done any evil againſt me, I freely forgive you." And so melting into tears he made known how he had acted.

The great man on hearing him was exceedingly troubled, saying that he grieved more for the loss of a noble woman than for the death of his son. But she replied: "My lord, I was that woman, and I will not give back evil for evil, but will return good for evil." And, when he had been reſtored to health, they asked her to remain there and to receive in marriage him whom she had healed; but, not consenting to their requeſts, she departed and went on her way curing lepers, until she came to Rome without being known, and there healed very many from their leprosy.

But a very grievous leprosy had through the vengeance of God attacked the brother of the Emperor, bringing him near unto death. And, being summoned to cure him without being recognised by any of the people near her, she compelled him also to confess

his sins which he had committed againſt her, in the presence of the Pope and the Emperor.

On hearing it, the Emperor in tears ſtruck his face and his breaſt with his fiſt, exclaiming that he was a wretched man; and all wept who were present and heard the ſtory of the good Empress. But she, unable to bear their tears, said firſt to the youth she had cured: "I am she." Then what joy filled Rome is not easy to tell.

And the Emperor wished to take her back to be his wife and Empress, who had thus, as it were, been reſtored to life by God. But she, in her heart resolving otherwise, said to the Pope: "I made a vow in my diſtress and trouble to our Lord Jesus Chriſt and to the Blessed Virgin Mary." And so she told them all that she had suffered, and that she would be united to no man again, but keep her chaſtity under a nun's veil. "Let my soul therefore be required of thy hand, if feareſt or loveſt man rather than God; and thou cover me with the sacred veil."

II

In the place which is called Tumba[1], there is a church of St Michael, the Archangel, splendidly built; which place being girt by the ocean is dreaded for its tide, by reason of the ebb and flow, by all those who come there wishing to visit the house of

[1] The old name for Mont-St-Michel, in Normandy.

St Michael; since it floods the bay twice a day, not, as in other seas, gradually, but with a rushing torrent and a dreadful roar, often meeting and cutting off travellers.

Now on a certain feaſt day of the Archangel, when crowds were haſtening to his threshold, behold all at once, as they were in the midſt of the sands (there being among them a certain poor woman of the neighbourhood already in child-labour), the dreadful roar of the sea broke out, and, when all were flying in haſte like mad people, this woman alone remained, having loſt the use of her feet through excessive terror and her labour. Sudden pains had seized her, and with lamentations passing shrill she called out for aid; but every man, thinking only of saving himself, pretended not to hear.

Therefore, when all human aid failed, she had recourse to Heaven. With tearful voice she invoked God and His Mother and the holy Archangel St Michael, and all the people too halted to look on the wonderful sight, and raising their hands to the ſtars mournfully prayed to God and His Mother for aid.

Now to all who implore the help of Chriſt there cometh the loving Mother of God, and, as it seemed to the woman, a sleeve held above her so kept her safe and untouched by the dreadful-sounding flood of the sea, that not even the leaſt drop of all that deep touched her garments. But she, as though she lay in the safeſt of dwellings, brought forth her child without fear, remaining there until again the sea, withdrawing its waves into itself, gave a free passage to the woman, and she came with the child to the

shore ; and the sight of her who had been left alone in the sea, coming forth no longer alone, was a marvel for all the people to behold.

III (*a*)

There was a certain woman of honourable life who, although united in wedlock and wearing secular dress, yet was under the rule of religion. She had, however, in her youth done something disgraceful, which she dared not tell anyone through shame. When confessing to a priest, she covered up her crime and ended thus : " For all the sins I have told, and for those which I have not told, I acknowledge myself blameworthy ", and saying this again and again she sighed heavily.

The priest weighing this in his mind artfully tried to draw forth what she hid. Failing in this, he advised her to open her heart to the prior of a neighbouring monastery, and himself warned him to question her closely. But neither could he extract anything from her. The woman, however, was wont every day to confess with tears this fault of hers before the altar or image of the Blessed Virgin.

Last of all she died in that state, and at her funeral her daughter, who lived in a remote village, was expected to be present. At last she came, and, after embracing the body of her mother with cries and groans

and hair all disordered, she cried out: "Ah, my mother! why did you leave me in my sorrow all alone?"—and this so pitifully as to draw groans from those who stood by, when suddenly life came back to her mother, and, as if waking from sleep, she said, "By the command of the Lord I have returned; unwrap this shroud; I will arise."

After she had been set free, a priest was summoned and the fault was confessed by her, whilst she testified that she had been at once delivered by the intercession of the blessed Virgin, saying to all who flocked to witness the miracle: "I was handed over to the tormentors and was being dragged off to punishment, but the Blessed Virgin coming to my aid asked those who were taking me away how they dared to take her handmaid, ordering them at once to put me down, until I was sentenced by the Lord. This done, she approached her son and prayed thus to him: 'I beseech Thee, Son, that the soul of her who so often wept for her wrong-doings before me, be not lost. To whom the Lord replied: 'Thou knowest, Mother, that without confession a soul may not be saved, but, because I can deny thee nothing, let her return and make confession, and then shall she be set free.' At once an angel was sent and brought me back. Therefore, after confessing my sin I will return." Saying that, she made the sign of the Cross, bowed her head on the bier, and breathed forth her spirit.

III (*b*)

A certain woman, the wife of a knight, one night saw him carrying a standard which was dyed a blood-red colour. Now she saw this when she was with child of a son, who was afterwards born. But, on awaking from her sleep, forthwith she loſt her senses and began to talk ſtrangely, to her husband's great amazement. And after a little it seemed to her that the Chriſtian faith which she had kept, was between her breaſts and was issuing quickly forth. In this way was the Devil deluding her in his desire to catch her soul. Her friends, too, saddened by this great misfortune which seemed to have happened to her, took her and led her round the shrines of the Saints in the hope that they might bring to her the joy of a right mind, and they passed a night in the church of the Holy Trinity. But the Holy Trinity, that is the Holy One, God in three Persons, would not even then grant her sanity, because it reserved that gift of health for the Blessed Queen, that is, the Mother Mary.

Then water was hallowed by many prieſts and its virtues ſtrengthened by much adjuration of exorcism and blessing, and she was plunged into this, with the result that her infirmity became worse and she was far more diſtressed with the madness in her head. But after a full year had passed since she fell into this illness, when the annual feaſt of the Purification of the Virgin Mary came round, she was taken to a certain church founded in honour of her, which ſtood in the midſt of a great wood, formerly built, it is said, by the

Greeks and very unlike other churches, yet quite suitable as a dwelling for hermits.

Passing the night therefore in that place at that annual feaſt, by the merit of the Virgin she was made whole and as if she had never had any sickness. For the senses which she had loſt wholly returned to her, and in the fulleſt way she recovered her powers of mind. After that, her husband and her other friends with her returned thanks to God and to His Glorious Virgin Mother.

IV

The Virgin Mother delivered a certain monk devoted to her from the Devil and also converted him from the habit of drunkenness.

The ſtory goes that a monk devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary having entered the cellar of the abbey, so soaked himself in ſtrong wine that he soon became senseless. And, after remaining there some time, awaking presently from his drunken sleep he tried to go to the church through the cloiſter, and there met him the Devil under the appearance of a very great bull trying to pierce him with its horns. Then there came to him a very beautiful maiden with long hair flowing over her shoulders and holding in her right hand a linen handkerchief, who rated the devil, and bade him depart from the household of God; then suddenly both visions vanished.

But when that monk walked on and approached the church, the Devil again came in the shape of a dreadful dog, who leapt violently upon him. Thereupon appeared that maiden, compelling him to depart and again rescuing the monk; and so the vision vanished.

And, as he entered the church, the Devil came in the form of an immense lion, roaring and making an onset on him, as if to devour him; but immediately the Blessed Virgin appeared holding a rod in her hand against the devil and threatening him with the suffering of other worse punishments; whereupon he at once vanished like smoke.

But the maiden, taking that monk by the hand quickly brought him to his senses, and stooping down printed on his brow the sign of the Cross and warned him never again to dare do such things, but in the morning to confess his sin to a monk, his friend, and to carry out any penance he might put on him. But when the monk asked her who she was, she replied: "I am Mary, the Mother of Christ." Hearing this, he fell down at her feet and tried to grasp her, but she ascended to heaven.

V

There was once a very great robber, a most wicked man, who thought of nothing but the service of the Devil. Yet he had this good in him that he scrupulously fasted on bread and water during the vigil of the Blessed Mary; and, when he went out to rob

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No. II.

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he used to salute her with such devotion as he could, asking her not to allow him to die in mortal sin.

But, being caught and brought to the gallows, he hung for three days and could not die. And when he called to those passing by and asked them to bring a priest, one came with the judge and the people and he was taken down from the gallows. Then said he that it was the Blessed Virgin who kept him alive; and so he was set free, and afterwards he finished his life in praiseworthy fashion.

VI

A knight, having put off his knight's belt, entered the Cistercian Order in Clairvaux. Once on a time at harvest, having gone out to labour with the brothers, he was told to sit there and rest, because he was full of years and had not been accustomed to work with his hands. Sitting thus, he struck his breast, taking it ill that he did no work while the rest laboured, and thus talked with himself: "Wretched weakling! what wise and noble men according to the flesh are working here who, if they wished to enter on worldly paths, would have a great name, and you sit here all day so very precious, you who have grown old in evil days, whilst they before you bear the burden and heat of the day, youths of gentle birth and breeding though they be."

Thus talking with himself, he saw in a vision descending from a hill above a white-clad company led by a

very beautiful woman, and before her two others carrying towels in their hands. This lady coming with her company saluted the brothers with a holy kiss and took them into her loving embrace, and by the hands of the two companions who went before her, she wiped away with the towels the duſt and sweat from the brows of the monks.

The knight, seeing this and ignorant that it was Mary, the Mother of God, gnashed with his teeth againſt the brothers, saying to himself: "What sort of brothers are these, and what sort of religion is this, where women are thus admitted not only to their presence and converse, but even to their embraces and kisses!" Whilſt he was thus thinking, one of that white-clad band approaching, said: "Why do you ignorantly imagine such things, old man? This lady whom you see is Mary the Mother of Jesus, who has come to see her reapers, comforting and helping them as her dearest sons." The knight was edified and consoled by the reassurance of this vision in Mary the Mother of God and his brothers, and laboured with the ſtrength of that spiritual food, making a good end of his life.

VII

A certain church was built in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and in the building thereof columns were brought of wonderful size. And when they could not be raised and every day men were wearied

out with labour in vain, there appeared to the master-builder the Virgin Mary in a vision, saying: "Be not troubled; take to help you three children from the schools and with their aid effect what you wish." And this was done.

And the people came to see that wonderful miracle and how that which a host of strong men could not lift three boys not yet fully-grown raised with the greatest ease.

VIII

When the Blessed Dominic was pleading with God and the Lord Pope for the establishment of His Order, whilst praying one night in a church at Rome he saw in a vision the Lord Jesus Christ standing in the air and aiming three lances at the world.

And the Virgin Mary, falling at His feet, begged Him to be merciful to those whom He had revealed, and to temper justice with mercy. To her the Son said: "See'st thou not what wrong is done to me and how wickedly Christians with their sins crucify me afresh? My justice cannot suffer wickedness to go unpunished."

Then His Mother said to Him: "As Thou knowest, because Thou knowest all things, there is a way by which Thou mayest bring them back to Thee. I have one faithful servant, whom Thou shalt send into the world to give a message to them, and they shall be converted and shall seek Thee, the Saviour of all.

Another servant also will I give to help him, who shall work in like fashion."

Then her Son said: "Mother, behold, I am appeased, and thy presence is well-pleasing to me. But show me whom thou doſt wish to appoint to so great a service." Then the Lady Mother presented the blessed Dominic to our Lord Jesus Chriſt, and He said: "Then shall he do well and zealously what thou haſt said."

She brought also the Blessed Francis, and commended him in like manner to the Saviour. Now the Blessed Dominic in that vision earneſtly regarded his companion whom he had not before that known, and on the morrow when he found him in the church among those whom he had not seen in the night, he recognised him and, running up to him, gave him a holy kiss and embraced him heartily saying: "Thou art my comrade. Thou shalt run with me. Let us ſtand together and no adversary shall prevail over us."

Also he told him of that vision, and afterwards they became of one heart and soul in God, and this unity they handed down to those who came after them to be observed for ever more.

IX

There was a certain prieſt named William, to whom many secret things were revealed from Heaven. For, as he ſtood in prayer, he fell into an ecſtasy. He was

carried before the Tribunal of Christ, at Whose right hand he saw an angel stand, with a trumpet, and, whilst all the host of Heaven listened, in a loud voice Christ spake to him: "Sound the trumpet."

When that was done, so loud was the noise of the trump that all the world seemed to shake like the leaves of a tree. And when He a second time said: "Sound the trumpet yet once again", the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, knowing that if He should sound the trumpet again, the whole world would come to an end, whilst the rest of the Saints remained silent, rose and threw herself at the feet of her son entreating Him with much supplication to put away His wrath and spare the world.

To her Christ replied: "Mother, the whole world lies in wickedness and so vexes me with its sins that I ought not to hold my wrath or spare mankind. Not only laymen but clergy and monks are utterly corrupt in their ways and offend me from day to day."

Then she said: "Beloved Son, if not for those wicked men's sake yet at least for my loved ones." And thus was Christ appeased.

X

There was a certain Frisian, a soldier by profession, who, whenever he returned from the tavern to his house, ill-used his wife with blows and curses.

One day, pretending illness through fear of her husband, that she might not draw his attention

upon her, she asked for the body of the Lord to be given to her. As the priest was coming to her, the drunken soldier met him with a pot of beer in his hand and asked him to drink, but he replying: "I am carrying the body of the Lord and therefore I will not drink", the Frisian in his anger struck the pyx with his pot. Then all the host like stars was seen to send forth light, and with groans the priest gathered it up into the pyx and sadly went his way. And the Frisian being summoned by the Dean of the province was excommunicated, but cared not; and after a while he died miserably.

Now the same year Jesus Christ terribly scourged that province. For the sea in parts of the province of Frisia passed beyond its bounds and flooded the land of many provinces, destroying villages and exterminating such a host of men that in all a hundred thousand perished And when the cause of the plague was hidden from the people, the Blessed Mother of God appeared to a certain very devout matron saying: "Because of the wrong done to my Son in the Sacrament of His body is Frisia sunk beneath the seas.' And presently the Mother of Mercy added: "Lift up your eyes to the sea." And when she had done so, she saw the pyx that was struck by the soldier floating on the surface of the waves.

And after the woman had come close up to it so as to recognise it, Mary said: "Behold in the place where my Son's body was scattered, a church must be built and as much reverence be shewn there as at the Sepulchre of the Lord." And indeed a certain very rich man of the family of that soldier built a church in

honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. From this it may be seen that sometimes the whole community is punished for the fault of one.

XI

In a certain church, when the priest was celebrating and the people ſtanding near, the image of the Mother of God began to sweat exceedingly so that the drops ſtanding on it were wiped off on the dresses of the matrons.

A man by God's will possessed of a devil was present at the time and, being asked the cause, replied: "Why do ye ſtand wondering? The Son of Mary had ſtretched out his hand to ſtrike, and, if she had not held it back, the world would certainly not now exiſt. Behold this is the cause of the sweating." And all were terrified when they heard words so amazing.

This is in Caesarius.

XII

A certain holy Father heard in the spirit Jesus Chriſt asking His Mother which were the greateſt of her woes in the world. And she replied: "Those which were greater than the reſt were, firſt, when

Simeon prophesied that Thou shouldſt be killed; the second was when I loſt Thee for three days; the third when I had heard that Thou hadſt been taken and bound; the fourth when I saw Thee crucified; the fifth when I saw Thee placed in the grave."

To her Chriſt said: "To him who for thy firſt great grief salutes me with a Pater Noſter and an Ave Maria, I will give knowledge and contrition for his sins. If he does the same for thy second woe, I will give him remission of all his sins. If he does so for the third, I will give him the virtues which he loſt through sin. And at the fourth I will give him the gift of grace, and will feed him before death with my body. And for the fifth, I will appear to him at death and will receive him into everlaſting life."

XIII

There were seven joys of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which she revealed to a certain man of religion. "Firſt, that the fulness of my glory exceeds all the glory of the angels; the second that above all the choirs of angels I am neareſt to the Holy Trinity; the third that all citizens of the heavenly kingdom honour me with veneration as Mother of the Higheſt of Kings; the fourth that, as the day is ravished with joy by reason of the sun, so all the Court of Heaven rejoices in my lovely presence; the fifth that my will

is one with that of the Higheſt Trinity and whatever pleases me, to that the Trinity consents with unutterable love ; the sixth that to all who serve me in this world, there is reward according to the judgment of my will ; the seventh that I am wholly certain and sure that the fulness of my glory will never wither and never wane."

XIV

A certain woman of simple and upright life used to worship the Holy Mary, Mother of God, often ſtrewing flowers and herbs before her image.

Now it chanced that the woman's only son was taken prisoner. And the mother weeping for him would not be comforted, and prayed with all her heart to the Blessed Virgin Mary for her son's deliverance. But seeing it was all in vain, she entered the church and thus addressed the image of the Blessed Virgin " O Blessed Virgin Mary, often have I asked thee for the deliverance of my son and thou haſt not heard me. Therefore, as my son was taken from me, so will I take away thine and will put him in durance as hoſtage for mine."

And taking the image of the Child from the bosom of Mary, she went home, wrapped him up in a clean cloth, and shut him up carefully in a cheſt. And, behold, the following night the Blessed Mary appeared

to the captive youth bidding him to go forth and said to him: "Tell your mother to give me my Son." And he coming to his mother, described how he had been set free. But she with great rejoicing carried back the image of Jesus to Mary and gave her thanks.

XV

A certain worthy and devout woman paid great honour to the image of the Blessed Virgin, worshipping her with salutations, prayers, and bending of the knee.

Now one day when she had sent her little girl into the nearest village and the child was playing out in the open country, a wolf carried her off as she played, and ran with her to a wood. Some men followed him with shouts, but returned without saving the girl. One of them, running to the castle brought word to the mother as she sat at table how her daughter had been carried off, saying: "Lady, a wolf has devoured your daughter." She, being exceedingly agitated, said to him: "Surely a wolf cannot have devoured my daughter."

Soon, however, she rose from the table, and, in much bitterness of heart entering the chapel, plucked the image of the Saviour from the bosom of His Mother, and standing before her with many tears broke out into these words: "Never, Lady, shall you

No. XIV (1).

No. XIV (2).

No. XCVII.

[*face p.* 32

have your Son back again, unless you restore to me my daughter."

O wonderful kindness and condescension in the Queen of Heaven to seem to fear she would lose her Son, unless the woman got back her daughter! She gave the order, and released her. And so, having followed up the wolf's track, they found the girl walking about among some bushes, and saw the marks of the wolf's teeth in her throat but only on the surface of the skin, where they remain to this day as a testimony to that great miracle.

Then, when they had taken the child to her mother, she, on seeing her, at once was turned to joy, and ran to the image and replacing the Child in her bosom said: "Because thou didst restore to me my daughter, I too restore to thee thy Son."

XVI

A certain woman used to repeat the words "Hail Mary!" always with great devotion. And, having to carry food to her husband in the field, because there was no one to whom she could entrust her child, she began by saying devoutly her prayer "Hail, Mary," and so forth, and committed her son to the Blessed Virgin in these words: "I have no one to put in charge over my child except thee." And so left the boy and went to her husband in the field.

But in the meantime a fire broke out in the next house and, hearing an outcry, they ran from the field to the house and found it burnt down. Grieving more for the boy than for the house and the loss of their goods the mother cried out : " O Blessed Virgin, to thee I entrusted my son." And they searched for the child and they found him entirely unhurt.

XVII

There is a famous place called Speyer on the Rhine where an image of the Mother of God is worshipped, which on three occasions spoke to St Bernard.

Whilst his mother was praying in the church, a little child holding a slice of bread in his hand went up and, breaking off a morsel, offered it to the image of Christ with these words, which the Germans are accustomed to use in their worship and prayers, " Pupu ". At last the image of the almighty Child is said to have returned his embraces and said : " Pupupe, do not cry. After three days thou shalt eat with me."

The mother heard and trembled. She told an old canon who came up about the miracle, who, wisely perceiving the truth said : " Watch your son from this day, and after three days you will not have him." At once the child caught a fever and died within three days and so went to Christ.

From Vincent's *Speculum Historiale*, Bk. viii, ch. 99.

No. XVIII (1).

No. XVIII (2).

No. XXVII.

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XVIII

In Aquitaine once when the Christians were communicating at Easter, among the Christian boys a Jew went up to the altar and took the Body of the Lord with them. Returning to his parents and being asked where he had been, he replied that he had gone with his boy-friends to the church and had communicated with them.

Then his father, being exceedingly angry, threw the boy into the fire, from which, however, the Blessed Virgin Mary saved him unhurt. But the mother of the the boy by her cries collected many Christians and Jews together, who, seeing the boy alive in the fire, asked him, after he had been taken out, how it was he felt no pain. And he replied that she who was above the altar of the Christians, had appeared to him and driven off all the flames with her cloak. Then understanding that it was the image of the Blessed Mary, they threw the father of the boy into the fire and he being at once consumed, many became more fervent in the faith.

XIX

A certain Jewish woman being in child-labour cried out with anguish that brought her near to death. All the skill of the midwives was of no avail; they waited for death alone to end her pains.

Just then, as she gasped for breath in torture of body and soul, suddenly a light from heaven shone forth above her, and with the light a voice was heard saying: "Call on the name of Mary and you shall be saved. Call on the Mother of Jesus and you shall be delivered." Then the light from without was withdrawn, but within by the virtue of those healing words the woman was illuminated right through her heart, and, putting her faith and trust in the Lord, she called on the name of Mary in a loud voice, and at once by a happy delivery brought forth her son without any pain.

But the Jewish women who were there, hearing that hated name, were stirred up and shrilly abused her. And had not the eye of God regarded her from heaven, she might perhaps have been done to death and given up the ghost under their hands.

And so, through the aid that Mary gives to those who worship her, she was saved from their murderous hands, and, when the days of purification were over, she took her sons and fled to the church, and after renouncing all the laws and customs of the flesh she took on her the gentle yoke of Christ.

From Vincent, *Spec. Hist.*, Bk. viii, ch. 199.

XX

In the city of Pavia there was a certain cleric named Hieronymus, who had much love for the Blessed Mary and took pains to please her in every way.

Now when the bishop of that country died, the clergy met and fasted, that God might show to them whom He wished to be bishop. During that time the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to one saying: "Go and tell the people to acccept my chancellor and to set him up as bishop of this city." And to his inquiry who he was, the Blessed Mary replied: "It is he who is named Hieronymus, who is active in the service of God day and night."

And so it fell out that he who had been zealous to serve the Blessed Mary in this life won that great honour and entered into other joys.

XXI

There was in a certain convent a brother named Hieronymus, a very good painter, who, being accustomed to adorn and beautify the figure of the Virgin Mary with excellence to the best of his power, was wont on the other hand to make a very foul and misshapen caricature of the Adversary, the Devil, in every picture, afterwards spitting on his image in scorn.

Hating him therefore for this, the Devil began to torment Hieronymus very strongly with a lust of wantonness, thinking to take vengeance for the insult put upon him. Finally the Devil appeared to him in the shape of a very beautiful lady, who promised to be wanton with him, if he would do what she asked. And Hieronymus replied that he would do anything to gain her favour. Then the lady said: "You are the

Sacriſtan of this place." He said he was. "Take, therefore," said she, "the treasures which you have under your control and in particular break up those of gold and silver and put them all together in a sack; and then you shall come to me to wanton with me for a long time."

Then Hieronymus promised to do this, and, whilſt he was engaged upon the work, the Devil began to cry out aloud: "Run, my maſters, run, for Hieronymus is pillaging the treasures of the church." But, when the monks ran and found Hieronymus had broken up the chalices and dishes and other vessels of gold and silver, they were exceedingly aſtonished, and asked what was the reason; and, although wishing to excuse himself, quaking with fear, he remained dumb. But they, as it was late, bound him to a pillar.

And the Devil came and mocked him, saying: "Are you not he who made me so mis-shapen in your pictures and spat on my figure? Because you mocked me I have mocked you. Behold, 'Miserable Wretch' shall be your name. Ask, therefore, your Mary, whom you made so beautiful, to help you now."

He therefore, being reminded of the pity of the Mother of God, began with all his heart to call upon her to vouchsafe her aid in his great affliction. And in very truth she, the Mother of Piety, did appear unto him, and said: "Be comforted in the Lord and hereafter ſtand firm and beware of the wiles of the Devil, for I will not desert you in this trouble." And immediately she seized the Devil and bound him to the pillar, releasing Hieronymus.

At the same time, being admonished by God at the proper hour he gave the summons to matins, and, having lighted the lamp and opened the book, ſtood in his usual place. But when the brothers came in and saw Hieronymus in the church and likewise bound to the pillar, they marvelled greatly what this meant, as they found the Sacriſtan at his cuſtomary duties and the treasures juſt as they were before. Going to the pillar, they found the Devil and exposed him, beating him severely. But he shrilly crying out fled away. In the end Hieronymus confessed his crime and began to tell them of the mercy of the Virgin Mary, how in her pity and power she succoured him in such need.

XXII

A certain poor woman in her love for her daughters carefully trained them to venerate the Blessed Virgin Mary, to whom she was devoted. Fearing they might be corrupted because of their poverty, she commended them to the care of the Blessed Virgin Mary, saying before her altar : " Lady, I present before thee these my two daughters, pure virgins, and whatever rights I have over them I surrender to thee, since I cannot maintain them." She also placed their hands in the hands of the Blessed Mary in token of their dedication to her.

And presently returning home they found a splendid young man at the door, who gave them a hundred pounds. Thus they were relieved of their wretched poverty. But on the other hand some folk envious of them said that they were harlots.

And their mother said to them: "Go to your mother the Blessed Virgin Mary and earneſtly entreat her to defend you againſt this evil report."

This they did, and when they were at the solemn feſtival of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the ſtreet in the presence of everyone, an angel of Chriſt descending from Heaven presented them with garlands of flowers saying: "Your mother, the Blessed Virgin, sends you these garlands in proof of your chaſtity." Therefore the prince of that land and all the people were amazed. Indeed, the prince of the land with the people built two convents for nuns in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, endowing them richly, and set the two ſiſters over the two convents, and thus their slanderers were confounded. Wherefore all the people honoured the Blessed Virgin and loved her the more.

XXIII

A certain adulterer had a good wife devoted to the Blessed Virgin, but the wretched adulterer hated her bitterly. Through the unfaithfulness of her husband the woman fell into such want that she had to be nurse to the child of a knight.

The adulterer through malice against his wife went secretly, and, after cutting the throat of the child, escaped. In the morning when the woman awoke to give suck to the child and saw it was slain, she broke out into such cries as to arouse all the people in the lodging. The father and the mother and all the people in that country being made aware of the calamity, the woman was seized, brought to trial, and sentenced to death, with no one to speak in her behalf.

Then she lifted up her eyes to heaven and said: "Mary, thou knowest my innocence; I commend myself to thee." No sooner had she spoken those words than a lady came carrying a beautiful boy, and thus addressed them all: "Stay, ye judges, for this boy shall be judge to-day." Immediately the boy said to the judge: "This is my judgment on the murder: Let the murdered child be brought here, and then let the woman's defence be heard."

All wondered at the wisdom of this boy, and at once the murdered child was brought. Then said the boy in judgment: "Judge ye justly, ye sons of men." And he said to the dead child: "In the name of the Lord, arise, and name him who killed thee."

Forthwith the boy who had been slain arose, and he who had never before spoken began to speak, pointing his finger at the murderer. And so the woman was set free and the adulterer seized. Meantime the lady and the boy vanished, and the adulterer, being tied to the tail of a horse, perished miserably.

XXIV

A certain Abbess who governed her nuns ſtrictly, and kept them close within the bounds of discipline, by her worthy zeal provoked the hatred of the devil, and, through his secret prompting permitted by heaven, she fell into the sin of wantonness with her page.

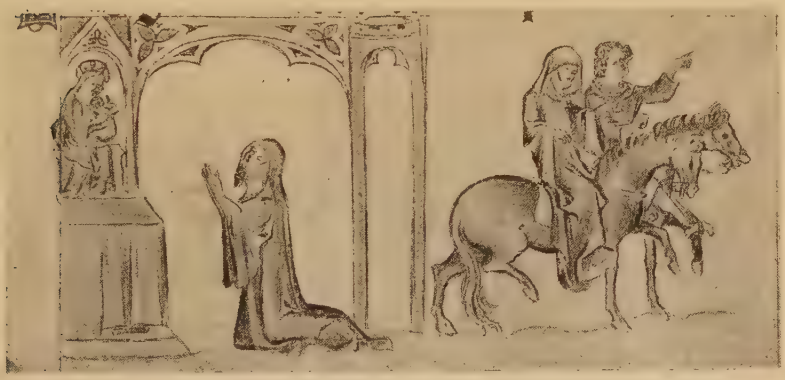
When she found that she was with child, she was juſt as ſtrict as she was before in keeping the nuns within the rules. But one of them watching her more closely and then noticing her gait and food, by her woman's wit detected her condition, and they at once vehemently charged her before the bishop with concealment of her crime.

The coming of the Bishop being therefore expected, the Abbess was praying, as was her wont, in a little private chapel, dissolved in tears, and making earneſt supplication to the Blessed Virgin. At length, as she prayed, she fell asleep for a little, and then the Blessed Virgin Mary, accompanied by two angels, spoke to her, and after pardoning her for her sin, promised that her disgrace should soon be wiped out.

And forthwith she told the two angels to relieve her of the burden of her child, and to give it to a certain hermit dwelling in the neighbourhood to be brought up for seven years. When this had been done and the Abbess saved from disgrace, Mary warned her to beware of sin in the future. "Know", said she, "that you will suffer many reproaches from the Bishop, but be not afraid, for you shall easily pass through that time."

No. XXIV (1).

No. XXIV (2).



No. XXV.

[*face p.* 42

After that the Bishop came and entered the chapter-house, and ordered the Abbess to come to him. Then going up to her and charging her with disgraceful conduct, he compelled her to leave the chapter-house. But she, fearing nothing, stood calmly outside. Two of the clergy being sent to examine her and finding no signs of pregnancy, the Bishop fell at her feet and besought her pardon, ordering all her slanderers at once to leave the convent. The Abbess, however, under confession, told the Bishop all that had happened. And he, blessing God, sent two of the clergy to the hermit to inquire about the child.

They went, and learnt from him that a boy born that night had been brought a little time before by two young men and had been entrusted to him on behalf of the Blessed Mary. The Bishop wonderfully glad on hearing this, left the boy in the hands of the hermit to be brought up for seven years. And this very boy, proving his fitness for it by his learning and his holy life, was the successor of that bishop in the bishopric.

XXV

In a certain convent of nuns many years ago there lived a virgin named Beatrice under vow of chastity. Devout in soul and a zealous servant of the Mother of God, she counted it her greatest joy to offer up her

prayers to her in secret and, when she was made custodian, her devotion increased with her greater freedom. A certain cleric, seeing and desiring her, began to use enticements. When she scorned his wanton talk, he became so much the more eager, and the old serpent hotly tempted her, so that her heart could no longer endure the fires of passion, but going to the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was the patron saint there, she said: "Lady, I have served thee as faithfully as I could; behold I resign to thee thy keys. I can no longer withstand the temptations of the flesh." Placing the keys on the altar she went in secret after the cleric, and he, after dishonouring her, within a few days deserted her. And she having no means of living and being ashamed to return to the cloister, became a harlot.

Having lived publicly for many years in this wickedness, one day she came in her secular dress to the gate of the convent, and said to the gatekeeper: "Do you know one Beatrice, formerly the custodian of this convent?" And he replied: "Yes, she is a very worthy lady, holy and without reproach from her childhood, who has lived in this convent to this day."

She, hearing these words, but not weighing their meaning, was about to go away, when the Mother of Mercy appeared to her in the form of a woman and said: "For fifteen years I have filled your office in your absence. Return now to your home and do penance, for no one knows of your departure." The Mother of God had actually in her shape and dress taken her place as guardian. At once she returned, and as long as she lived gave thanks to the Virgin

Mary, and in confession made known to her confessor all that had happened to her.

XXVI

A certain matron, the wife of a knight, through the Devil's prompting committed adultery with another man. After a time God inspired her to repent; she grieved for her sin and entirely forsook her lover. He, however, keeping watch on the house until the husband was absent then entered it, and, finding her alone, tempted her to sin as before and, when she refused, he tried to force her.

And she, seeing that she could not resist him, had recourse to the guardian of all chastity saying: "I beg thee, Lady, by the sacred 'Hail, Mary' to deliver me." At these words all the spirit went out of the soldier and withered, and so the woman escaped unhurt, the soldier not daring ever to say another word to tempt her or anyone else.

XXVII

A certain young knight in the flower of his youth and of unstained chastity was vassal to another knight, his lord, and lived with him.

Now, through the devil's malice he began to be hotly tempted with love of his lord's wife. And,

after enduring this for a whole year, he put away his shame and revealed his passion to the lady. Repulsed by her, he was afflicted more than ever, for the matron was chaste and faithful to her husband. The knight went, therefore, to a hermit and with tears confessed to him his passion.

The holy man assured him in reply: "I will give you counsel which will cure you. All this year and every day you shall salute the Blessed Virgin Mary with the angel's words a hundred times, and whatsoever you wish, you will obtain through her." For he knew that she who loved chastity would not deny a chaste youth.

And whilst the young man with singleness of heart was paying this worship to the Virgin Mary, as he had been taught, one day, whilst sitting at the table of his lord, he remembered that that was the last day of the year. Rising at once and mounting his horse, he entered a neighbouring church and repeated his usual prayers.

And as he was leaving the church, he saw a very beautiful matron, whose beauty exceeded that of other women, pass in front of his horse and grasp the reins. As he wondered who she was, she said: "Does my beauty please you?" And when he said: "I have never seen one more beautiful", she answered: "I will be thy wife. Come to me." And, kissing him, she said: "This is our betrothal. On such a day in the presence of my Son shall the nuptials be completed."

From that he knew she was the Mother of the Lord, whose purity delights in human chastity. From that

hour he was fully delivered from temptation, so that even the wife of his lord wondered. When he had recounted these things to the hermit, the latter, praising the goodness of God, said: "May I be present on the day of those nuptials." And, when the day came that had been fixed in the presence of the hermit, the soldier in his death-agony breathed out his soul, and in his heavenly home entered upon the promised marriage.

XXVIII

There was a certain very rich parish-priest, who had as servant a deaf and dumb man, these infirmities rarely being found separate. At length the dumb man became so ill that, as he lay on his bed, he was expecting to die. Then the Blessed Virgin came to him at the very moment of death and saluted him, saying: "May Jesus Christ, my Son, save thee." And thereupon at that moment when he saluted him, the Blessed Virgin said: "Get a priest to come to you—repent and confess your sins; take the sacrament of the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ, my Son, and the other sacraments of the church, and afterwards I will carry you to the rest prepared for you." And he caused a priest to be summoned, to whom he confessed and received from him the sacrament.

After he had communicated, all those present asked him in wonder what had happened to him that he

was speaking, since never had a word from his mouth been heard before. He replied that the Blessed Virgin had in invisible form visited him and ordered that these things should be done as aforesaid, and had given him speech. Then they asked him if he had ever done her any service. He replied he did not know and he had never before understood or heard of such, but, when he had seen his master regularly fasting on the Saturday and the people doing no work on the following day, he had become aware that his lord had some good motive and so had fasted with his lord with the same intention.

When he heard this, the parish priest said: "That is true; he has always fasted on the Saturday, when I was in the habit of fasting in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary." Hearing this, all praised God and the glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, his mother, with great amazement and joyful voice, since she had not abandoned those who had faith in her and those who served her, world without end and for evermore.

XXIX

In a certain monastery there was a monk named Henry, who, when the abbey had no abbot, sought in every way to get appointed to that office. This, however, was contrary to the wishes of the monks of the place. Although, however, they were opposed to it, through the power of the king then reigning he

was appointed Abbot. Afterwards the king, seeing that he was not approved by his own abbot and the monks of that place, deprived him of the office and sent him to the Abbey of Hales,[1] which was a long way off, and there for some time he remained. Afterwards he returned to the Carthusian monaſtery and again began to dwell there. Not long after he had returned, a serious illness attacked him and he died.

Now, although this Henry was much to be blamed for all that he did, yet he had a great regard for the Holy Mary, and always served her to the utmoſt of his power, and often celebrated Mass for her two or three times in the week. And, being sorely afflicted by this sickness and in fear of death, he sent for his Abbot to come to him to shrive him before he died, leſt he be punished and condemned for his sins.

Now, whilſt oppressed by sickness, he kept turning over where he lay, not knowing what was best for him to do, and asked the monks present for God's sake and for pity's sake to do what might help him, and in the ſtrait in which he was placed to entreat the mercy of Almighty God to have pity on him and deliver his soul from the punishment which he feared for it, when it left his body.

In the midſt, however, of the litanies and prayers offered by the Abbot and the monk he became dumb and like one dead. And the monks, hearing of this, ran to him in sorrow and grief that he had not been anointed before he died and had not received the sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord. But, as they ſtood before him, seeing him lying speechless

[1] A great Ciſtercian house in Glouceſtershire.

and dead, and not knowing what they ought to do for him, since they had not been able, when he was still alive, to give him righteousness, they dared not now bury him when he was dead. And so, as they ſtood round, seeing a great quantity of froth issuing from his mouth, and believing him to be more dead than alive, suddenly he came to life again, beginning to moan and ſtretch out his hands to them and to say: "Holy Lady, Mary Mother, I give thee thanks for that thou haſt delivered me, and that I have not incurred damnation, as I had deserved, damnation that would inſtantly have come upon me, had not thy compassion and kindly aid reached me. Holy Mother Mary, I render thee hearty thanks for this that thou haſt this day besought thy moſt sweet Son, my Lord, for me, that I might receive His body and blood and not lose my righteousness, which a Chriſtian muſt have."

After this he asked the Prior and the reſt of the brothers there to bring him the body of the Lord and adminiſter the sacrament. And, when the body of the Lord had been brought, he began with tears to say and truly to confess with his lips that this was in very truth the body of the Lord which he had of a virgin, and which hung on the cross for sinners, and then the sacrament was adminiſtered to him. This done, he asked them to lay him quickly down.

And when everything was finished, being now brought to a fitting end, he blessed the monks who were there and gave them forgiveness, and the monks did likewise to him. Next they placed him upon the hair-shirt, and immediately he gave up his spirit gladly and cheerfully. His spirit—as they believed

who were present and saw the things which happened to him—was received by the Holy Mary, whom he had called upon, and was taken by her to the blessed abode. After this, they buried him in the chapter-house blessing God, and they praised the Holy Mary, Mother of the Lord, who had shown him such pity, as they themselves saw.

XXX

In the crusade of the Catholics against the heretic Albigenses two worthy clerics were passing through the country of the latter, and on their way, seeing a deserted church, one said to the other: "It is Saturday, let us go into this church and say a mass in honour of the Holy Virgin Mary;" for they carried with them a book and chalice and priest's vestments.

But, before the mass was ended, heretics appeared who, entering with arms in their hands, dragged the priest from the church and cut out his tongue by the roots. His companion with much trouble took him, mutilated as he was, and entrusted him to monks; and they, like good catholics and monks, heartily received the dumb priest through their faith in Christ and in honour of His Mother, and showed him every kindness.

But on the night of the Epiphany, when the solemn watch-service was being sung, he summoned the attendants by beating on the wall with a staff. When they asked him what he wanted and he made signs that he should be carried into the oratory, wishing to spare him, they did not do as he wished. At length, as he

persisted, they took him into the church and put him down before a certain altar. On his calling upon the Mother of Mercy with all the earnestness of his soul, she appeared to him holding in her hand a piece of flesh that had the shape of a tongue, and said to him, as he prayed: "Because you were deprived of your tongue through faith in my Son and through honouring me, behold, I give you a new one. Open your mouth." When he had done so, she put her fingers into his mouth and joined the flesh exactly to the root and made them one, and so disappeared. And, he breaking out into words of praise, as Zacharias did, shouted aloud: "Hail, Mary," and the rest of the salutation.

As he kept repeating the salutation, the attendants ran up in amazement, and the monks ran from the choir to see the great miracle, glorifying God and His Mother. In grateful remembrance, therefore, of the benefit conferred on him, the cleric became a monk in that monastery. This is from Cesarius.

XXXI

It is written in ecclesiastical history that there was a certain Didymus born blind from his mother's womb. He in eager desire for God's wisdom kept His commands, and God gave him wisdom. Now being through his faith frequently engaged in wordy disputes with Jews and heretics, he very often confuted the unbelief of heretics. Therefore he was often taunted with his blindness by some who said he served

without reward those who were unable to give him light. Thereupon he called a truce, having trust in God that He with the Blessed Virgin would grant him light.

Then a three days' fast was decreed by Boniface the Roman Bishop, in which with almsgiving and prayers, they earnestly humbled themselves before God. When these prayers had been offered and much people had gathered together, the blind man, standing between the Christians and the heretics, sang with great devotion the responsory "*Gaude, Maria Virgo, cunctas hereses*" etc. with the verse in praise of the Blessed Virgin, and immediately in the presence of all he saw quite clearly.

And a great number of infidels was converted at heart to the faith, and this custom became established among the Romans of daily singing in honour of the Glorious Virgin that responsory in memory of that event.

XXXII

A certain cleric devoted to the Blessed Virgin, whenever he happened to pass through the Church, used with all humility and devotion to bend his knee and to do honour to her with the angel's salutation, saying, "Hail, Mary" etc, and a second time bending the knee: "Blessed womb, which carried Thee, O Christ, and paps that gave suck to our Lord and Saviour."

At last he was visited with bodily sickness and his life despaired of, such agony seizing him that he bit through his tongue and lips, and would have done the same to his limbs, had he not been prevented. His tongue and lips being entirely destroyed and his other limbs badly hurt, he lay a dreadful sight, bereft of bodily sense, when he saw near the head of his bed a person standing of beautiful face and majestic appearance.

As far as may be understood, this was the sick man's angel bewailing his griefs, and after this fashion he seemed to lament: "O Lady of Mercy, Fount of Pity, is this the reward, this the honour given to the faithful? Is this the tongue so wont in ardent love and by long custom to salute thy body, thy breasts, and childbirth, so that hardly aught else could ever be heard in the church of God? O Lady, if thou dost fail him, then what Saint will aid his votaries? Not thus, O Lady, not thus shall the hopes of men come to naught by finding first in thee no refuge."

As he thus cried out in the ears of the sick man, being as plainly seen by his eyes, the Mother of God did actually appear and draw near to his bed, as if to make amends for the neglect of her servant with which she was charged, and, drawing out her breast, she seemed forthwith to put it into the mouth of the sick man, and as the dew of her sacred milk was poured into it, suddenly his tongue and lips became whole and fair to see as before, and throughout his body his former health returned, and he arose sound and free of all sickness.

And he began to make known to all the mercy that

had been shown to him, and afterwards, surrendering himself and all that he had to the service of God, lived a religious and godly man to the end of his life.

XXXIII

From Prudentius' *History of the Damascene.*

John of Damascus, who kept his chastity through life, was devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary, learned in Greek literature and the liberal arts, and a pleasing writer. Being captured by the Saracens, he instructed the son of the lord whose household he had joined, in reading, writing and other branches of knowledge, so that, in his style of reading, his handwriting and intonation he was exactly like John himself.

But because John was beloved by the Emperor Theodosius, who had been his pupil, the man was tortured with envy of him. And so he composed and wrote a letter secretly containing treason to the Emperor and the empire and sent it to Constantinople, where being thrown down in the palace it was found and read. The peculiarity of breaking off in the formation of a letter was recognised to be John's. John was summoned by the Emperor, convicted of abuse and insult, and declared traitor to the empire. When the letter was shown to him, he replied: "Truly, lord, I see that the manner of writing and composition are mine, but God is my witness that I did not do this

thing." Therefore, as everyone cried out against him that he was not confessing the truth and shouted that he was worthy of death, the judges, because he had been a friend of the emperor, gave sentence that he should not die but that the hand which had committed the crime should be cut off.

This being done, the severed hand was hung up in this John's monastery as a warning against such a crime. Presently, going to the image of his spiritual mistress, uncovering the wound and stretching out his arm he interceded with her thus: "Is this, my Lady, the reward of my services? I deserved that thou shouldst punish me for my sins, but with what purpose didst thou allow the member used in that office to be utterly torn away. For this hand oft in writing prepared hymns in thy praise and offered up the body and blood of thy Son."

As he thus declaimed on his bed, neither fully awake nor yet sleeping, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him in a great light and with a cheerful countenance saying: "What is the matter with you, O most faithless youth?" "Alas, Mistress", said he, "why do you ask? Where were you when I suffered these injuries? Behold, to my shame, ay and to yours also, the severed hand of your follower hangs in the church." Then said she: "Be comforted in the Lord, my son."

At these words, as he looked, she went into the church, and bringing his hand from thence, restored it to his arm. Then he returned thanks for that act, and in the morning having called the brothers he showed them the hand. And soon afterwards he celebrated a mass to the Blessed Mary in a loud voice.

The Emperor, having heard of the miracle, came on foot to him, and, kissing his hand, he asked him if he knew of anyone who had the same ſtyle of composition and manner of forming his letters. This indeed he told him, and the truth after careful search was discovered.

XXXIV

A certain groſs and passionate man was walking about one day in the village, when he ſtruck his foot, which was bare, againſt a ſtone, and hurt it, and, being a little angry with the pain of it, he cursed the ſtone and named the Devil saying that it had been put there in the name of the Devil.

Hardly had he finished speaking when suddenly he felt all his face grow hot as if with a violent flood of hot water, and after he had returned to his house, the whole of his face began to swell; his eyes, nose, and mouth disappeared through the excessive swelling, so that he looked like nothing else than a monster. But after four days had elapsed, the puffing up began to be reduced and was filled with puſtules and bladders so that every one said he was ſtricken with elephantiasis. Next the disease descended to the lower parts and seized on the joints from the loins to the extremities of of the feet, and so at laſt all the lower part of the body remained without feeling, so that he could not even feel fire, although he could see it. Never rising without

help from his bed, never lifting himself to a sitting posture to turn over on either side, but lying continually on his back, yet in all his pains he strove to be patient, to give thanks to God, to keep his sins in sight and humbly to pray God's pardon for them

One day, that of the Resurrection of the Lord, as he heard the bell ringing for mass, raising his head and stretching out his hands towards the church, he besought the tender pity of the Saviour, and behold! suddenly he saw a very beautiful woman standing by him, who said: "Know that your prayers have been heard by the Lord Jesus Christ, my Son; do therefore what I counsel, and have yourself taken to my church, and there before my image plead for your recovery, and immediately you shall feel the virtue of divine aid." And when he had done this, by God's help and the intercession of God's mother he was entirely healed.

XXXV

A certain countryman named Peter, on the feast day of Mary Magdalene, yoked his oxen to the plough, and, having in anger cursed the work he was doing, had his oxen and plough destroyed by lightning, and God's bolt at once struck Peter himself who had uttered that curse. And the flesh and sinews of his leg and shin being burnt, he begged to be carried to the church of the Blessed Mary Magdelene, whose

feaſt-day he had desecrated. This being done, the fire was entirely extinguished in his body, but he was not made whole.

Now he heard them talking about a certain church of the Blessed Virgin Mary noted for its miracles, and asked to be taken there. Having gone aboard the ship, as he was sitting on the poop, the shin-bone came away from the joint, but even this he bore with patience. And when he came to the church, that same night the Blessed Virgin, whom he faithfully entreated, appeared with St Hippolytus and commanded him to cure Peter. At once Hippolytus brought together from all parts the thigh, the shin, and the foot, and in a moment made him whole.

XXXVI

Three knights hated a certain man and sought to kill him. Finding an opportunity when he was unguarded by his friends, they rushed on him to kill him. But he being aware of it, fled into a church dedicated to St Mary in the hope that, because of the reſpect he had shown her, he might escape the peril of death that threatened him. But those cruel and impious men, entering the church, slew him unmercifully before the altar. Therefore the Holy Mary was ſtirred up againſt them, and immediately by the vengeance of Almighty God on such daring they were attacked by fever which began to burn

up their bodies. Feeling the vengeance of God come upon them, they were compelled by their excessive pains to implore the Mother of God herself whom they had deeply offended, and they were converted to a hearty repentance. And by reason of their prayers, the Holy Virgin, who is ever full of goodness, mercifully delivered them by the grace of God from the fire that consumed them; yet complete health was not restored to them. Soon, however, when they could travel, they went to the bishop and told him what they had done, and they asked him to lay penance on them. Then the bishop, bidding them repent the violence with which they had slain the man, laid on them the penance on which he had resolved, namely that they should continually carry those weapons on them and thus endure fitting punishment, until they should satisfy God and His Holy Mother.

XXXVII

In a certain convent once happened a very pleasing thing. There was there a sister of approved life, very zealous in her worship of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Having once injured her knee by bending it too often in her devotions, at midday as she slept in the infirmary, she thought she saw the Blessed Virigin stand by her in a dream carrying in her hand a box of ointment; who, putting her fingers into this, anointed the hurts of the nun with the ointment. And

immediately there was such a sweet smell that the sisters sleeping in the next room awakened by its fragrance rose and came to her bed, because the scent seemed to be ſtronger there, and roused the sleeper.

And when they asked her whence the odour came, she, although not ignorant of the cause, was unwilling to say anything to them and therefore would not tell them, so that they might go to sleep. And when they were again asleep, again the Mother of the Lord was present, leading her in a vision into the open space within the walls, and placing her hand under her chin, she said: "Kneel down." And when she had done so, our Lady added: "In future you must thus humbly ask for pardon." [This from Cesarius.]

XXXVIII

A certain youth in German parts on the death of his parents was corrupted by bad companions and squandered the whole of a fine inheritance on dicing and taverns. Being wretched now and homeless, he wandered about his native country. But, though in other reſpects foolish, yet he kept himself chaſte.

A knight, his uncle, pitying him not a little, met him one day and spoke to him thus: "It ill becomes you, my dear kinsman, to go so utterly aſtray, you with your nobility of birth, who might make a worthy man and maſter, if such madness had not seized you." The young man, laughing at his words as womanish,

the knight added: "Is there anything which you could bring yourself to do for me?" And he said: "Certainly there is." And the knight said: "I want you then every day to salute the glorious Mary, Mother of God, fifty times." The other, answering with tears, said: "Would that I could say not every day, but even once." His uncle urged him saying: "You ought by all means to do this, hoping that some day the Glorious Virgin may turn the eyes of mercy on you and may intercede with her Son because of your misery." The young man consented to his request, and went away.

A year after that it happened that the uncle saw the young man and asked him if he had kept his promise. And he said: "I have kept it, and I should be sorry not to have done so. It comes with me before all, before my worldly affairs." With joy the uncle said: "I advise you next year also to double your service in this way to the Mother of Christ with your salutations." And the youth replied: "Be it so." But at the end of the second year he returned to his uncle saying: "Through the intercessions of the Mother of Christ all the madness and misery of my condition has vanished and all the strength of my will is fixed in a firm resolve to do right." His uncle replied, with tears: "Blessed be the Mother of Piety, and I give thanks to you, master, who have put trust in her saving counsels. Nothing therefore remains but to test the firmness of your resolution in the coming year, and if I find you worthy, I will provide a suitable marriage for you. Do you in the meantime diligently honour your helper with thrice

fifty salutations. The youth agreed and proved ſteadfaſt.

And when the year rolled on to its end, his uncle fulfilled his promise to the youth. He arranged a marriage, and at the banquet that was given, the kinsfolk on both sides gathered together. And when the tables were set and the bride and bridegroom had sat down together in their places to partake of it, suddenly the bridegroom remembered that, in his preoccupation with other things, he had not yet that day made his payment of salutations due to the glorious Virgin, and, immediately rising, he whispered to his uncle to ſtop for a little the serving of the dishes. And when he had agreed, the young man went alone into his room and paid his vow to the Mother of Chriſt with all the more devotion because he had proved that he had been heard with greater favour, and suddenly, as he completed the laſt of his thrice fifty salutations, there appeared to him the Glorious Virgin Mary, shining more brightly than the sun, and showing the young man three pleats in her gown, one in front and two at the sides. "Behold", said she, "your salutations with which you diligently honoured me have been written in gold, and because, trifler and erring as you were, you did for all that keep your body in clean chaſtity, soon a deadly fever shall seize you, and on the third you shall come to me without any ſtain on your flesh." Having said this, the Glorious Virgin vanished.

But the young man went out, bidding them all be glad and feaſt and make merry, telling them that he himself had loſt all appetite for food, and for the

present could not eat with them. And whilſt they severally sat at table and ate, the young man meanwhile went up into his bed and summoned his friends to the chamber and told them what had happened to him. Now on the third day the young man died, as he had said. But, his bride, being unwilling to marry any one else, afterwards remained a pure virgin.

XXXIX

A ship was in the midſt of the sea laden with travellers, whose piety took them to the country of Jerusalem there to worship. A shipman in that craft, having discovered a leak below where the sea came in, and that there was no way of saving themselves, haſtily lowered the ship's boat, which was carried aboard, into the sea, and with the bishop and some others of higher rank got into it. As, however, one was about to enter, he fell into the sea, and, at once being swallowed up in its deeps, did not reappear. But the shipman, speaking to those whom he had left in the ship, warned them of the inevitable danger threatening them, and urged them to confess their sins and earneſtly to commend their souls to God; and this they did.

Very little time had elapsed when, as they cried out to heaven, behold the waters filled the ship and it was drawn down deep into the jaws of the ocean.

But the bishop with the reſt pouring out tears and groans, was commending to God the souls of his companions, whose bodies he saw perishing by so dreadful an end. And as he turned his eyes in all directions over the rolling surface in the hope that he might see some succour for their drowning bodies, behold he espied beautiful doves, one here and two there, or more, suddenly rising out of the waves of the sea and flying swiftly far out of sight in the sky, and perceiving that they were the souls of his companions, as much as he had wept before, because he had seen his companions drowned, so much the more did he mourn now that he was not one of them.

And when at laſt borne along in the boat, he came to land with his companions, behold that one who was seen to fall between the two vessels into the sea, they now suddenly saw coming forth from the sea alive and unhurt. Amazed and overjoyed at recovering him, they inquired what had happened to him and how he could thus have been delivered from the immense seas. And he said: "When I was falling into the water, I called on the name of the Blessed Mother of God, and so, whilſt thinking of her and calling on her name, I came to the bottom of the sea. And the Mother of Mercy, the Virgin Mary herself, who can by no means forget those who remember her, ſtood by me under the waters and in loving kindness covered me with her mantle and thus protecting me under the waters brought me even to the shore." And when he had said this, praises were offered to God and the fame of the Mother of Mercy declared and spread abroad.

(From Vincent, *Spec. Hist*, viii, ch. 78.)

XL

A certain abbot was caught in the midſt of the British seas with others in a very great ſtorm sent by God, so that all despaired of their lives. And so some were calling upon the Blessed Nicholas, some on the Blessed Andrew or any other Saint, for every one in his need invoked his own patron Saint in familiar terms.

But when the abbot saw them calling on all these less powerful Saints, but no one naming the Mother of Mercy, who has power over heaven and earth and sea, he said: "What are ye doing, my brothers? Why do ye call on those other Saints, who have less power, and omit one who has more power than all of them? Ye do indeed well, but ye would do much better if ye all with one voice acclaimed the Mother of Mercy.

Being thus counselled, all with one voice invoked the Mother of God, and all cried out to her to have pity on them. The abbot himself also, who had had nothing to eat except one apple, and who for two days and nights was in such sore diſtress that he could hardly draw breath, began with his monks to chant moſt earneſtly the responsory: "Blessed, etc.", with its verse "*Ora pro populo*".

Scarcely had the people and the monks sorrowfully finished the prayer with much devotion, when, behold, at the top of the maſt a great light appeared like a candle, chasing away the darkness of night and flooding all in the boat with its brightness. And the ſtorm ceased entirely on the sea, and at the command of the Queen of Heaven there was a calm. And not

long after there dawned a fine day and the ship came to the land to which it was sailing.

(From Vinc., *Sp. Hist.*, li, viii, c. 89.)

XLI

A certain knight was taken, and, after a long imprisonment having promised to pay money for his ransom, he was taken out of the dungeon and lodged in the upper part of the house, fetters being put on him and servants appointed to guard him.

One night therefore, when he was sleeping among six attendants who were guarding him, he called earnestly on our Lady, and in his sleep he heard a voice saying: "Be of good cheer: the Blessed Virgin will deliver you." At those words he awoke and was glad, but thinking over his vision and, wishing to know whether it was real or a phantasy, he quickly loosened a finger and then his hand, and without any difficulty freed his foot from the chain, although he had often tried this before without success. And since one of the armed servants had been awakenened with him by the rattling of the chains, the knight tried to replace the ring, but could not.

Then, understanding that this miracle had been done for him through the merits of the Mother of God, when the servant went to sleep again he rose stealthily, and holding the chain on one foot, he let himself down

from the window by a linen sheet and fled. The guards finding this out, pursued him with horns and hounds, but could by no means find him, although they surrounded him on every side. Coming afterwards to a church, he offered up the rings which he carried with him, on the altar of the Blessed Virgin as an act of faith. (From Cesarius.)

XLII

There was a certain noble named Theophilus, who became impoverished and was at a loss what to do. At last he thought of going to the cross-roads and talking with the Devil, to get him to aid in his worldly affairs. This he did, but when the Devil was besought with prayers by Theophilus to restore to him his wealth, he asked Theophilus if he could and would do what he proposed. He replied that he would, and took an oath. Going there three nights in succession, on the first night he renounced his baptism, on the second his Creator, on the third even the Mother of Mercy.

But the Devil considering his love for the last, said: "If you will confirm this oath in an indenture written in your blood, then all is complete." This was accordingly done, the indenture written in the blood of Theophilus being confirmed by the Devil's seal.

It happened that one day Theophilus, stung with remorse, began to weep, and, as he wept, to

prostrate himself before the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, calling on the Blessed Virgin earnestly. But the Blessed Virgin was ever pitiful, and in her kindly pity for him she pardoned what he had done. And when Theophilus, prostrate before the altar, was weeping bitterly and praying to the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the image of God, as if in anger, would not listen to him and turned his face away.

Seeing this the Blessed Virign placed her son's image on the altar and with Theophilus went to the Devil. Thus was he brought back to the grace of God and the Devil ordered by her to return the indenture of renunciation which Theophilus had given to him, and thus Theophilus was converted and at last entered into the joys of heaven.

XLIII

A certain noble, a great sinner, once on a time was taken by his enemies, who decided to kill him, but he humbly besought them saying: "I implore you by your regard for God's Mercy to defer my death for a little that I may confess my sins to some priest."

But they, fearing his bodily opportunity and his deliverance, would not agree to it. When, therefore, they bade him throw himself on the ground to be beheaded, he spoke these words: "O Lord, Thou knowest my heart", and adding "I commend my soul to the Virgin's Son", so was beheaded.

There was at the time near by a man possessed of a demon. And when people ſtanding near him heard of the death of that man they said to him : " Now ye will have great joy because of the ſoul of that wicked knight." But he replied in a mournful voice : " By no means, for when dying, he uttered one word, by which he was saved."

XLIV

A certain official, whose duty it was to hang and torture people, used to commend himself to the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, when he passed before her image.

And so one day, as he ſtood there and prayed, a messenger came from the judge telling him to go and hang a man. And, whilſt he was on the way, his enemies came and killed him. Now there was in the same city a certain prieſt of holy life, who every night used to go round to all the churches in the city. But rising that night on which the herald was killed, and intending to go to the church of the Blessed Mary, on coming to the graveyard he found it full of men, amongſt whom he saw many dead whom he had known in their life time. Now he asked one of them why this was and why such a crowd of people had gathered there. He replied : " An executioner has been slain and the wicked spirits say his soul is theirs, while the good Mother Mary on the contrary claims it as hers.

Now God is coming as judge to hear the pleading on either side, and that is why we have gathered here."

But the priest was thinking within himself: "Shall I hide somewhere to wait for the end of the case?" Hiding himself, therefore, he saw a throne on which the judge came and sat, and by his side his Mother, Mary. Moreover, there came also devils leading the executioner in chains, who tried their utmost to prove that his soul was theirs by right. To the contrary Mary said that in the same hour as he was killed he had commended himself to her protection, and for that reason, she asserted, his soul belonged to her.

The judge, however, hearing this, and desiring to carry out her wishes and yet to inflict no wrong on the devils, gave sentence that the soul should return to its body until it should repent of its wrong-doing, and decreed that prayers for that soul's confession should be instituted by the Pope. He was asked who should make this known to the Pope. Then the Blessed Virgin replied: "Call the priest who lies hidden there." And with him there was sent to the Pope a rose of great beauty as a token that on seeing it the Pope might believe his words.

XLV

There was a certain great robber who had never done any good, except that he had fasted one Saturday in honour of the Blessed Virgin and kept one mass to

her, that she might convert him before his death. To him the Blessed Virgin appeared saying: "I have asked my Son on your behalf that you might be converted from your sins. He has granted you this favour, which will be given you on your saying five words which will deliver you from your sins." Now some time afterwards the robber was caught, kept in prison, and three days later led out to the gallows.

On the way God granted him sincere repentance, and in that true repentance he uttered five words with much earnestness: "God forgive me a sinner", and immediately he was reconciled to God and was saved.

XLVI

A certain man, who had long been devout, entered the Cistercian Order, in which, although for some time he lived a holy life, at last overcome by the temptation of the Devil, he fell into sin. Hence he gave occasion for scandal to many. Being severely disciplined for this, as is usual in that Order, in very bitter penitence he returned to his senses and with tears and prayers had recourse to the Glorious Mother of Christ.

Lying in great grief, therefore, for no little time, at last one day he prayed and fell into an ecstasy, in which he saw the Glorious Virgin and in her arms, as it were, a Child at her breast of surpassing beauty. And he, seeing the Mother supplicating the Son on his behalf, earnestly

PLATE VI.

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IVORY VIRGIN AND CHILD.

(13th century.)

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begged that he might be delivered from his sin and trouble and be restored to the grace of his former life. But when the child turned away his face in resistance to her and the Mother on the contrary shifted her son to the other part of her arm (the forearm), passing her arm to the other side the better to bring kind looks into his face, and he again turning away his face as his Mother many times pleaded with him to soften his unwillingness, at last the wonderful loving Mary prevailed over her Son and won him to countenance the man's redemption so that he pardoned the man's sin and brought him back to the grace of his former life.

XLVII

In the diocese of Chartres the maidservant of a certain knight committed sin with him and thereby frequently angered her mistress, his wife. And although that young girl was thus sinning, yet she daily offered up the angel's salutation seven times bending her knees to the Blessed Virgin, and this her mistress well knew.

One day, being exceedingly angry, she said to her: "Ah! I would certainly have had you killed by my kinsmen because of my husband, whom you have so often taken from me, but the Holy Mother of God appeared to me last night commanding me not to hurt

you, because you are her handmaid, and she promised to make peace between me and you."

And at once the other felt remorse and said: "Since the sweet Mother of God has deigned to call me her handmaid, behold I promise you that she shall make a real peace between you and me, for I will never do you any further injury, but will henceforth through love of our Lady go away." And at once leaving the diocese, she went to a monastery of good repute in the diocese of Cambrai and there served God and the Blessed Mary until her death.

XLVIII

A certain man lived carnally with another woman, his wife being aware of it. She finding it hard to endure this, made complaint in the church of St Mary, praying to be avenged on her who had taken away her husband. St Mary, appearing to her, said, "How can I bring harm upon her, for each day she bends her knee a hundred times to me?" But the woman in much vexation said: "Why will you not avenge me? I will make my complaint to your Son."

She went out of the church muttering those words. But the adulteress met her, and when she inquired what she was saying, the other replied: "I was complaining about you to the Virgin Mary, and she replied that she would do you no harm because every day you made a hundred genuflexions to her, and it is for

that I am murmuring. But I hope that her son will avenge me." Hearing that, the adulteress at once threw herself at her feet begging her pardon and faithfully promising never again to commit sin with her husband.

XLIX

A certain knight, young and given up to the world, had a wife very devoted to the Blessed Mary. Long and often she prayed the Blessed Mary for the conversion of her husband.

And behold, one night, her husband was carried in the spirit to the judgment of God, and there was accused and convicted of all his excesses. And when he was abandoned by all, the judge said : " Is there any one of the Saints here whom he ever honoured ? " The Virgin Mary replied : " O Lord, once in reverence for me he offered a great candle. Let him find pity, I pray Thee, because of that." And the judge said : " Because of thy prayers I allow him to save himself, as far as he may, with that candle."

When therefore the devils tried to carry him off, he scorched them with his lighted candle and manfully defended himself. But by reason of the anguish and fear in which he laboured, lying on his bed he sweated violently and made such mournful cries that his wife awoke. Putting her hand, therefore, upon him, she found his skin rough like the bark of a tree, and on him

long white ſtiff hairs and a great beard, and, ſuſpecting him to be an adulterer, she cried out. But when the servants ran to help her he awoke, but could not speak, making a horrible noise like an ox. And they would certainly have slain him then, had he not given them a certain proof of his identity. At laſt recovering in some measure his power to answer them, he told them in order what had happened.

Moreover, he was entirely changed in heart and with his possessions he erected a gueſt-house, and there with his wife serving God and giving thanks he showed proof of his reformation and amendment to all men by word and example alike.

L

There was a certain man who was religious in name only, but, wherever true religion was concerned, hard-hearted and careless. He was, however, in the habit of praying to the Blessed Virgin and saying once every day a hundred "Hail, Mary's." Coming near his end, he was caught away in an ecſtasy, and devils charged him before the Great Judge seeking a sentence that would adjudge him to be theirs. God, therefore, knowing his manifold sins, said that he muſt be condemned.

Meantime the Blessed Virgin came offering schedules in which were contained all the "Hail Mary's," and

begging her Son to allow him to receive a milder sentence. But the devils brought many books full of his sins. The books on both sides were put into the scales, but the sins weighed most. Then the Blessed Virgin, seeing she was doing no good, earneſtly besought her Son, saying: "Remember, Beloved, that Thou didſt receive of my subſtance, visible, tangible and sensible subſtance; give to me one drop of Thy blood shed for sinners in Thy passion." And he replied: "It is impossible to deny thee anything. Yet know that one drop of my blood weighs heavier than all the sins of the whole world. Receive therefore thy requeſt." Receiving it, she placed it in the scales, and all those sins of the religious weighed againſt it as light as ashes.

Then the devils departed in confusion, crying out and saying: "The lady is too merciful to Chriſtians; we fail as often as she comes to contend with us." And so the man's spirit returned to his body, and on recovery he related the whole tale and became a true monk.

LI

There was a certain man of the world engaged in rural work and occupied with earthly cares. He, being ensnared in many wicked acts, did also when ploughing his land ſteal as much as he could from his neighbours, and by crossing their landmarks with his ploughshare secretly joined the land of others to

his own. He kept the Holy Mother of God in mind, however, and often saluted her with devotion.

And so, when he died, the devils gathered together, assured of carrying off his soul. There came, too angels to put forward the good deeds done by him. The devils on the contrary began to bring up his countless evil deeds. And when in joy at this they thought they were victorious, one of the angels put in that he was accustomed with much devotion to salute Mary, the Holy Mother of God. Hearing this, the foul spirits relinquished the man's soul and fled from it in confusion.

And so that soul, being rescued from the power of its adversaries by the grace of God, escaped everlasting damnation through the merits of His Mother. Blessed be she with Him for evermore.

LII

A certain man, learned in all knowledge and pious, said there was once a robber in his country who took delight in slaying men. Being caught by his enemies on the mountain-side, he was beheaded on the spot. But the Virgin Mary gave him true repentance and confession of his faults.

One of his enemies ran for a priest, but the priest would not come near and dared do nothing unless they joined the head to the body. This being done, he heard his confession, at the end of which the priest

asked why he had been unable to die. Then that young man told him the cause of the miracle. "I heard that anyone could get confession before death who fasted out of respect for the Blessed Virgin Mary four times on any Saturday. This I observed, and never at any other time did anything good." Then being shriven, he breathed his last.

LIII

A certain man sought to plunder a poor woman, and, finding she was fasting, young as she was, and asking the reason, she replied; "Because whoever on Saturdays fasts in honour of the Blessed Mary, never dies without true repentance." He, pleased at hearing this, carried out her advice. At last his head being cut off he cried out: "Confession, confession!" Amazed at this the bystanders brought a priest to confess him.

After they had joined his head to his body, and he had made a devout confession for his soul's salvation, he said: "I have earned the benefit of this repentance through the Blessed Virgin Mary, on whose sabbath I have devoutly fasted that I might be certain never to die without the healing power of the sacraments." Hence the devils standing round, being unable to endure the presence of the Blessed Virgin or the sacred confession, fled. After he had said that, he received the sacraments and devoutly rested in peace.

LIV

A young noble was unceasing in his salutations of the Blessed Virgin. Later, being caught in the act of plundering, he loſt his head, but not his speech, until he had made a full confession and had devoutly received the body of the Lord.

LV

Three brothers were totally dispossessed by a knight, lord of a caſtle, and hence lurking in neighbouring woods, did much damage to travellers. Two of them in consequence that knight seized and hanged. The third, exasperated by this and yet extremely afraid that if he should be taken, no one would spare him, opened his heart to a certain monk. The monk, telling him to give up robbing henceforth, he replied he could not ſtop at all until he had firſt ſtruck down that knight with arrow or sword to avenge his brothers.

"Yet", said he, "I have resolved to keep the four faſts of the Blessed Mary, that is to say, the Purification, the Annunciation, the Assumption, and the Nativity, with bread and water, that the Blessed Virgin may not allow me to die without confession and the viaticum." To this the monk replied: "It is good, but little or no advantage to you, since you are not giving up your intention of sinning."

Going away therefore soon after he was seized by that knight and his squires, and in their rage his body was cut to pieces, and when, although he was entirely dismembered, he could not die nor lose his speech, he said: "In vain do ye spend yourselves, for ye cannot kill me until I have first confessed and communicated." They went for a priest, who at once came, and, after he had confessed and received the viaticum, forthwith he expired.

LVI

A certain man who was afflicted with a grievous and hopeless disease, had his heart set on this alone, how he might commend his end to Jesus and the Blessed Mary. And whilst he was disquieted in his anxiety about his death, the Blessed Virgin appeared and asked him if he knew her. When he said he did not, she replied: "I am the Mother of Christ, the Mother of Mercy and Goodness." Much comforted by these words, he awaited his end with more confidence, believing that he who loved the Mother of Mercy would without doubt find mercy.

LVII

A certain knight daily saluted the Blessed Virgin Mary, when he rose in the morning, and when he lay down to sleep late in the day, with a "Hail, Mary!"

and never did any other good thing. And he was saved by the grace of the Virgin.

LVIII

A certain religious in a monastery of St Peter lived a bad life. A time came when with some of the brothers he took medicine for the health of his body, and immediately afterwards died without confession or the holy sacrament. His soul was conducted by devils to the prisons below. St Peter, whose monk he was, perceiving this, went to the Lord Jesus Christ and begged deliverance for the soul of the brother. To whom the Lord said: "Knowest thou not what the prophet said under inspiration by me, 'O Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, etc.? He who enters without spot and doth righteousness'. How can this man be saved when he has neither entered in without spot nor wrought righteousness?" Hearing this, St Peter went to the Blessed Virgin Mary, begging her to intercede with him for that soul. And the holy Mother of God rose and with her holy maidens stood before her Son, and her Son said to her: "What art thou, my mother and ye, my beloved sisters, asking of me?" And when the holy Mother replied that she was begging for the soul of a brother, Christ said to her: "Because it is your wish that he should obtain pardon by reason of your prayers, I grant that the soul of the brother shall return to his body that

after repentance for his wickedness, he may enjoy everlasting rest."

When the holy Mary had made this known to St Peter, in haste St Peter drove off the devils with the key which he held, and rescued the soul of the brother from their power, and charged two angels to lead back that soul to its body. Moreover, the brother, returning from death, told what had happened to him and what he had seen and how he had been rescued from the power of the devils by the supplications of St Mary and St Peter.

LIX

In a certain house of the Cistercian Order in Spain there dwelt monks in such fashion that their lives were an example to others. One of them was so zealous and devout in the worship of the Blessed Virgin and so attentive in singing her Hours that he remembered the Blessed Virgin Mary not only at each verse but at every syllable, and so went through the Hours with much labour.

And after he had done so for seventeen years in succession, he fell grievously sick, and his companion by permission of the prior attended upon him. He, knowing that the man was holy and most devoted to the service of God and His Mother, begged him with loving regard to say something for his edification. And the other replied: "Yesterday our Lady visited

me and warned me that seven days from now I shall pass to the Lord, and she added : ' Because you have served me more zealously than all other mortals, I will do for you what I have never done for any other,' and throwing her arms round my neck she gave me a kiss."

Now when the blessed man was in his death agony on the day which had been foretold, the prior, where he lay asleep in his cell, saw a crowd of white-clad people enter, who said they had come to lead away that man's spirit. And immediately he was aroused by the beating of the death-board and arose and ran to him ; and he doubted not at all that it was the heavenly army by whom the devoted servant of the Mother of God was to be conducted.

LX

A certain religious, having served God continuously for thirty years, was grievously enfeebled and wished to die ; and a great hoſt of devils gathered, seeking his soul. When he saw them, he began to cry out : " Alack that ever I entered this order ! Better had it been for me to be a frog or some beaſt."

And the brothers, hearing his cries, gathered together and prayed for him. And his servant, coming to him, said : " Father, why do you say such things ! Have you not always been a good man amongſt us ? Repeat therefore, father, after me,

'Mary, Mother of Grace, Mary, Mother of Mercy.'" When he had said this and had lain for a little while, he began to say: "It is good for me that ever I entered this Order, that ever I was born."

And the brothers, hearing so sudden a change, began to ask why it was that he had so loudly cried out, and he replied: "Therefore did I cry out, because an innumerable company of devils gathered together desiring to carry off my soul, but when I said that prayer, at once the Mother of Mercy came to me; on her coming the whole company of devils departed, and now she has invited me to her banquet." And so his spirit was released.

LXI

A certain man showed great respect to the Blessed Virgin, but had committed a criminal offence which he had never confessed, being ashamed to speak of it. Now after a long time, led by remorse, he sought a secret place and confessed to God saying: "O God, be gracious to me, a sinner! I have committed such and such a crime, which I have never dared to confess to any man through shame. I confess it to Thee, O God, and I pray Thee to forgive me and inspire me to make such reparation that I may amend!"

And as he said that in his heart, there appeared to him the Devil in the form of a priest saying: "Why are you thoughtful?" And he said: "I have for a long

time concealed a criminal sin which I am ashamed to tell." And the devil said: "I order you never to confess this sin and to believe that it has been remitted." He at once promised to do so. And when that man came to the last hour of his life angels contended with the devils for his soul, and, said the devils: "It is written that the Lord says, 'Such as I find thee, such do I judge thee.' According to these words he is ours, because he was found in mortal sin." And immediately taking his soul they dragged it with joy to hell.

And when they came to the gates of hell, there met them the Blessed Virgin Mary who said: "Because ye artfully deceived him, that he might not confess the mortal sin that he had committed, I order you by the dreadful day of judgment to lead back his soul to its body that by repentance of that sin which through your deception he hoped he had amended, he may now live a better life."

LXII

There was a certain priest of a parish who had power in the world and repute, but was given up both to vice and to the getting of riches. This man had in his cure a rich nobleman and a poor widow.

Once on a time, as they were going to rest, they both received the summons of death. The priest was called to visit the dying rich man, and, having heard

his confession, he gave him the sacrament to commend the departing soul to God. But he was too anxious to get the fleece to trouble about the sheep. When he received the rich man's message, he haſtened to go, entered his palace, passed into his bed-chamber. The rich man was lying clad in purple and silk and covered with jewels, reclining on soft down cushions. There also he found a crowd ſtanding round offering comfort to the rich man in wheedling flatteries. His wife and sons and all his family were mourning for their lord.

Meantime there came some one on behalf of the widow, who said that she, being on the point of death, asked for the sacrament of a Chriſtian's salvation. The prieſt, entirely occupied in cajoling the sinner, made no reply. But the deacon, standing by and speaking earneſtly, said, on behalf of the lonely woman: "It will be a great crime for us and perilous for the woman, if it should so happen that by our negligence she passes away without partaking of confession and the sacred myſtery.

And the prieſt's anger being roused, he replied: "What a madman's idea! to leave a noble patron for a humble widow!"

"Be not vexed," said the deacon. "If you bid me, I will visit the sick woman." The prieſt approving of this, the deacon quickly departed. And, taking the life-giving hoſt, he came to the hovel of the widow, who, poor in all worldly possessions yet full of good works, lay proſtrate on the hard ground, her emaciated limbs covered with a little ſtraw.

And so that deacon, approaching the house of the

poor woman with the sacrament of the euchariſt, ſtood at the door, and lifting up his eyes saw guardian angels from heaven ſtanding by the servant of Chriſt, as she lay. For Mary the Mother of Jesus ſtood there with her band of virgins, and brought a linen cloth and was busy wiping the sweat from the face of the sick woman in close attendance.

Amazed at seeing this, the deacon ſtood afar off, but the Queen of Heaven looked kindly on him in his wonder, and, seeing the body of God and her Son, she proſtrated herself on the ground with her virgins and adored the hoſt. And when they ſtood up, the man of God took confidence and entered. Then Mary putting a seat for him and bidding him not to be afraid, he sat down. Next he received the widow's confession, gave her the sacrament, and with psalms fortified her againſt death.

After that he haſtened with joy to the house of the rich man. And, ſtanding on the threshold, he saw black cats running round the bed of the rich man, who, seeing them and knowing them to be bitter enemies, bellowed loudly: "Take the cats away, take them away; help a miserable man!" Finally, a black man threatened him, and with a dreadful look plunged a hook, which he was carrying in his hand, into his throat. The unhappy soul, finding in all his conduct no comfort for his conscience, was in fear and trembling, and death little by little seized upon the poor wretch. Then that black man in a rage drew out his hook from his quivering throat, and uttering a dreadful cry, the sick man gave up his unhappy soul. Rushing on the sinning soul, the reſt of those confederates

in malice wounded it with their scourges and plunged it into the place of gloom and the lake of eternal death.

Seeing this, the deacon was seized with trembling, and falling down loſt his senses ; but soon the Mother of the King of Glory appearing to him, said : " Fear not, beloved one, the malice of the Devil shall not hurt you, for whom is prepared the happiness of heaven." Reſtored by those gentle words, after he had recovered he rendered thanks to his comforter, and out of that vision he profited not a little.

[From Vincent, *Spec. Hyſt.*, li, viii, ch. 96.]

LXIII

A certain noble count on his way to the jouſts came to a township where there was a very beautiful girl, such that her beauty was noised abroad throughout the province. Seeing her, the count made many offers to her parents. But through love of her maidenhood which she had vowed to the Blessed Mary, all those worldly promises were counted as naught by her.

Finally, she was taken by force from her father's house to the lodging of the count.[1] But, being put on a horse, she fell off it into a deep pool which she had to cross. Rescued from this, she was carried off again to a place to be dressed in other clothes and adornments.

[1] The meaning here is conjectural, the text being too corrupt for a close translation.

But she did not forget her vow and commended her chaſtity to the Queen of Heaven, weeping abundantly and devoutly plying her with proſtrations, genuflexions and prayers. The count heard with tears her vows to the Virgin, and he, ſtricken by conscience and remorse in reſpect for the Blessed Virgin Mary, gave her up unharmed to her father and promised with sincerity, when he sent her back that he would not return home until he had built a cloiſter and placed the maiden in it ; but alas ! receiving a mortal wound at the tournament, he was prevented by a sudden death from being shriven, and in accordance with canon law was buried outside the cemetery.

The Blessed Mary appearing to the bishop of the place, a second and a third time urged and commanded him to bury her knight with Chriſtians, He, having called together the kinsfolk and parents, told them of the vision. They rejoiced all of them that for his good intention he had the right to be buried in holy ground. Moreover, they themselves built over his tomb the convent which he had vowed, and in it that virgin afterwards became Abbess.

LXIV

There lived in a certain place a clerk who was light in character and entirely given up to worldly pursuits. Yet he always showed reſpect for the Holy Mary and frequently saluted her with the Angel's salutation.

No. LXIII or LXIV (1).

No. LXIV (2).

No. LVIII.

[*face p.* 90

He was killed by his enemies, who, knowing that he had lived an irreligious life, decided that he must be buried outside the cemetery, and that was done.

And after he had lain there thirty days, the Blessed Virgin appeared to a priest, saying: "Why have you acted so unjustly to my chaplain as to lay him outside the cemetery?" When he asked who she was, she replied: "The Holy Mary. He who was buried thirty days ago by you outside the cemetery was my most devoted servant and used very often to salute me before my altar. Go quickly therefore and bury him in the place to which he belongs." After she had said this, in extreme wonder they opened his grave and on his lips they found a beautiful flower and his tongue whole and undecayed. Then all who were there, understood that this had happened because with his lips he had paid reverence to the Mother of God, and taking up his body and bringing it with respect to the cemetery, they buried it there.

LXV

There was in a church of the Blessed Virgin Mary a certain deacon who was very devoted to her worship but was frequently inflamed with mad outbursts of passion. Now it happened one day that he was so provoked to anger that he struck certain persons.

And they who were attacked, not enduring his mad

violence, when he ſtruck, ſtruck back, and the deacon got paid for his fury, and being transfixed with a mortal wound came to a sad end.

Now the bishop of that place, after inquiring carefully into the case, considered this deacon by reason of the wicked intention in which he had ended his life was unworthy of being in communion with his brethren and, after expelling him altogether from the monaſtery, had him buried after that expulsion amongſt the laymen, and so it was done.

And behold at midnight Mary, the Blessed Mother of God, ſtood before the bishop in a dream, harshly accusing him of injuſtice to the dead man. "Make haſte," said she, "and have the deacon whom you expelled from his cloiſter, buried with due honours, as far as may be, since he cherished reverence for me; and pay penance for your dishonour of me and your injuſtice to him."

At once the bishop in amazement rose from his bed, and in the morning calling all the clergy together, he told them what he had heard in his dream, and soon they carried him back to the monaſtery and buried him with great reverence.

LXVI

In a church where it was the rule that the responsory "Rejoice, Mary", with the verse "Gabriel" in which there is "Let the Jew take shame", should be sung

daily, a certain scholar, because of the sweetness of his voice, was ordered to sing it.

Now some Jews passing in front of the church to their vineyards and, unable to endure the shame of the words, cautiously took the scholar and killed him in the vineyards. Soon afterwards, as they were leaving the vineyards, the Glorious Virgin Mary brought the boy back to life and commanded him to sing her praise with confidence. The Jews, again recognizing the voice and ſtricken with wonder, ſecretly queſtioned the boy. He replied that he had indeed been killed, but had been reſtored to his former life by his Queen. When the Jews knew this, no ſmall number of them were converted to the glory of the Glorious Virgin Mary.

LXVII

There was a certain nun in a convent of ladies of great zeal and ſervice who was loved more than all the ſiſters, for she was more zealous than the reſt in frequent faſting and praying and other virtuous exercises, with which she continued to please the Moſt High and His Mother by her worship in that convent.

But when the Devil, who ever remains envious, saw that he was repulsed by her, he persuaded the wretched woman to despise the commands of God and to

violate in the body that virginity which she was keeping in her heart. But after she had fallen, she repented and and was horrified at the sin she had committed, because she had offended God and His Mother. Soon, however, she threw herself in abasement at the feet of the Abbess, promising to do whatever she enjoined. Her spiritual mother, in kindly compassion placed a penance on her by which she might offer to God well-deserved amends; but, before she could repent, she departed from life.

After her death, she was delivered up to severe punishment, which she bore for her sins. And so one night she shewed herself to the Abbess in a vision, and she, when she saw her, had no fear, but quickly inquired of her if she was under punishment or had now passed out of it. To that she replied: "I am under punishment, mother and true wife. Alas, pity me; my sins have not yet been forgiven, for I am among those reputed women of the world and I have loſt the robe which I had in my former virginity, when I was a chaſte virgin and dedicated to God, but know this, that I shall be saved in the future through the moſt Blessed Mary, for she, moſt blessed ſtar of the sea, who is the comforter of our souls, when I was in great anguish came to me all shining as the sun; and, knowing her to be the holy Virgin Mary, I cried out with tears and said: "O Mother of Mercy, what shall I do? Alas, for what have I been born who have so fallen! Where waſt thou, Glorious one, when I came here? O sweeteſt lady, if thou haſt heard me crying, why haſt thou scorned my prayer? Doſt thou not see these fires which burn me? For they continually scorch

and yet do not consume me. O Mary, Virgin Mother, come now quickly to aid me and suffer me not any longer to be tortured with these pains, but mercifully hear me, who so often shewed thee love. How canſt thou whom so often I saluted, forget me ?—and when I continually commended myself to thee and prayed for all whom the holy church received ? Woe is me ! if, as it seems, my labour has been in vain."

To these words the Mother of God said in answer : " I will be near at hand to help thee, my daughter, but firſt shall thy punishment be finished, which thou haſt deserved. For thou haſt sinned exceedingly in deserting me and my Son, to whom thou waſt vowed as a virgin and consecrated, and haſt provoked me greatly to anger. For he who despises my Son dishonours me much. But because thou didſt daily salute me and serve me zealously, be not disheartened, for thou shalt not perish eternally, but shalt be saved. For those who pour out their prayers to me with their whole heart I will powerfully assiſt in all their perils, body and soul." After she had thus spoken, she left me comforted. Now I pray you, my miſtress and dearesſt mother, aim at serving and devotedly obeying her that you may find grace with her."

The Abbess, hearing these things, rejoiced greatly, and in the morning rising up, she bade all the siſters come to her and revealed to them what she had seen. She warned them, too, to love the Mother of God. And they offered up all those prayers which that siſter used to sing to them.

LXVIII

A certain knight who had a caſtle plundered traders without mercy. This man every day saluted the Virgin Mary. On one occasion a holy monk was passing by, whom that knight ordered his men to rob. But the holy man asked the robbers to take him to their lord because he had some secrets to reveal to him.

Now, being brought before the lord, he asked him to call his whole household together that they might hear what he had to say. This being done, he said: "You are certainly not all here. Search diligently therefore and ye will find some one." And they found that a chamberlain was absent and brought him. Then the holy man said: "Truly it is he whom I seek." When he therefore had come into the midſt of them and had seen the man of God, he fell into a frenzy, rolling his eyes and head this way and that like a madman and dared not come nearer. Then the holy man said: "I adjure you, in the name of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt to say who you are and why you have come here." And he replied: "Alas, I am compelled to betray my secret. I am not a man, but a demon, and for fourteen years I have dwelt with this knight because our prince sent me here that on the day when the wretched man should omit to say his cuſtomary salutation of Mary, I should be carefully watching to ſtrangle him at once, having received authority from the Lord, and so he might be for ever united with our company. Now the knight, hearing this, was in great fear, and, throwing himself at the feet of the monk, he sought pardon and amended his life.

LXIX

There was a certain nobleman who had a wife devoted to God and the Blessed Mary. But since he had no son, he asked God to give them offspring, and his prayer was granted. Their child they brought up with all possible care. But when their son had reached years of discretion and saw other boys with crowns of roses and flowers, he did like wise and carried them to the church, where he found an image of the Glorious Virgin, and offered the crowns to her, devoutly placing them on her head. And this he did daily, whenever he had a convenient time.

Now a time came when his parents wished to have him married. He opposed them with all his might and offered his virginity to God and the Blessed Virgin Mary, saying that he wished to be the servant for ever of God and the Blessed Virgin, His Mother. And so afterwards he became a monk and in good living from day to day profited more and more, but when he saw that he could no longer carry on his former practice because he had no roses and flowers, and since as a monk he was not allowed to busy himself with flowers lest he might cause offence to others, yet he determined to say daily a hundred " Hail, Mary's " and out of these to make a crown for the Blessed Mary ; and so he did every day with tears and a clean heart.

One day it happened that he had to go on the business of the monastery (for he had been made Abbot) on a long journey, and he forgot his vows. With his servants he mounted his horse and they went through a great wood. And they being ahead, and he

all alone, he began to think that he had not paid that day his customary praise to the Blessed Virgin. And at once dismounting, he devoutly said the usual prayers. And as he stood in prayer there came a robber behind him intending to kill him and carry off his horse and other goods. And as he was aiming his lance at him, the monk being all unwitting of it, he saw a very beautiful boy take, as it seemed, roses one by one from his lips, and then making with the roses a crown, the boy placed it on his own head. Seeing this the robber threw himself at his feet and begged his forgiveness, telling him the whole story and the whole truth of the matter; and he became a good monk and completed a good life in praiseworthy fashion right up to the day of his death and rested in peace.

LXX

There was a certain clerk who did nothing good, but rather was full of vices. Only was there this good in him that he regularly and devoutly said the Hours of the Virgin Mary.

But when one day he was crossing a river intending to gratify his desires, because he had not offered his morning praises, he began to say: "Hail, Mary, full of grace," and then fell into deep water, and after that uttered no more salutations, but when he came to the words: "The Lord with thee," he was drowned

and seized by demons. But in spite of them he was defended by the Blessed Virgin and through her merits brought before Christ for trial, where after much disputing the Virgin Mary asserted : " My son, Thou hast said 'Where I find thee, there will I judge thee.' Thou shalt also be justified by Thy words. Therefore, my Son, although this man hath lived a bad life, yet in the end he passed away praising me, in which he was ever diligent in his life. I beg that he may find favour in Thy sight. If the demons will not believe me that this is so, let them look into his mouth." The demons, doing so, found printed in golden letters " Hail, Mary, full of grace " and thereupon in confusion they departed. Then the Judge commanded the soul to return to the body and to change its life for the better, which it did.

LXXI

Hard by the church of St Severinus at Cologne there lived a hermit. When the matrons of the township visited him, one of them confessed that she could not utter the name of Our Lady without tasting an extraordinary sort of sweetness, and, being asked the cause of this great favour, she said : " Every day I have been in the habit of saying five ' Hail, Mary's ', bending the knee at each, and through this I have earned such sweetness that all the spittle of my mouth seems at the time of praying turned to honey."

When he had heard that, this hermit through the example of the devout woman during seven days went through the angel's salutation in the aforesaid manner and number; and behold he began to taste great sweetness in the utterance of that most sweet salutation in his mouth and throat, the sweetness of Christ far surpassing the sweetness of honey.

LXXII

There was a woman, a sinner, who had never done anything good but saluting the Blessed Virgin every day with the angel's salutation, namely: "Hail, Mary", and every Saturday she said a mass to her praise and glory. Now being near unto death she said: "Lady Queen and Mother, although I have never done anything good, yet I trust in thy mercy and commend my soul to thee." Now devils came desiring to have her soul, and there came also the Mother of Mercy and took it. At once the devils cried: "She is ours," but Mary said: "Ye know not that she hath saluted me daily with the angel's salutation and has said a mass in honour of me and in her death agony commended her soul to me." "She", said they, "hath committed very many crimes." To whom Mary replied: "That soul may never be damned that have served me and hath committed her soul to me." Whereupon the devils fled, and she joyfully took her soul with her.

LXXXIII

A certain cloistered nun was long mocked by a devil in the shape of an angel; for she had not been gifted with a discernment of spirits. Often and often the devil appeared surrounded with a false halo of brightness, and addressing the silly woman in friendly guise marvellously mocked her. But when she was examined by her confessor, although she gave good answer, yet the priest as a prudent man on consideration inquired into the confidence with which she replied. And when she confessed to him that she was frequently visited by an angel of the Lord, he knowing that in the words of the Apostle an angel of darkness transfigures himself into an angel of light, replied: "When the angel again visits you, you will say, 'My lord, I beg you to show me our Lady, for if she has caused the vision, you will bend the knee and say "Hail, Mary", and if he remains, it is no delusion, but if otherwise, be sure you are mocked by him."

When she had done this, just as she had been instructed, the devil said: "Why do you desire to see her? Let my presence be sufficient to you." But when she strongly insisted, a maiden of wonderful beauty presented herself to her eyes. Seeing her, she threw herself at her feet saying: "Hail, Mary" and the phantom melted into a whirlwind. The disappearance of her enemy so alarmed her that she became mad, and hardly after a year and a half recovered her senses as before. You see what weight the name of Mary has.

LXXIV

In the township of Nonna[1] of the diocese of Cologne a certain prieſt named Peter was vicar of the church. He through some judgment of God hanged himself at the door of his room, and his concubine, named Adelheidis, terrified by so horrible a death renounced the world and took the religious habit of a nun in a certain convent.

Now one day as she was ſtanding in the dormitory and looking out of the window, she saw a demon in the form of a young man ſtanding near the well which adjoined the wall of the dormitory, and as she looked, he placed one foot on the timber with which the well was surrounded and with the other seemed by a flying leap to bring himself into the window to her. And when he ſtretched out his hand and tried to seize her by the head, in terror she fell backwards and cried out, almoſt swooning. Her cry being heard, the ſiſters ran up and laid her on her bed.

When they had gone and she had recovered a little and was lying all alone, again the demon came and with some amorous words began to tempt her. And when she, knowing him, refused the evil spirit with scorn, he said in answer: "Good Adelheidis, say not so. Agree with me and I will get you for husband a man of honour, upright, noble, and rich. Why do you torture yourself with hunger in this poor place, with watching and faſting and many other hardships, wearing yourself to death before your time?

[1] *Sic*, Probably a misreading for Bonn.

Come back into the world. Enjoy the pleasures which God has created for man. With me to guide you, you can lack nothing." Then replied she: "I grieve that I followed you so long. I will not consent." And hearing these words, the demon vanished. Thereafter as that most vile spirit day and night molested her, some of the sisters advised her to have holy water always ready and when he came, to sprinkle him with it; but others, that if she had no water, she should burn incense.

All these things she tried indeed, but got little profit from them. For as often as he saw the sign of the cross made against him, or holy water sprinkled or incense burned, he desisted indeed for a little, but soon returned. Then another sister of riper years and wiser advised her to allow the demon to come nearer and then in a loud voice to hurl in his face the angel's salutation. She did this, and the devil, as if stricken by an arrow or driven by a whirlwind, fled away, and from that hour never dared to come nigh her.

LXXV

A certain knight had entered the Cistercian Order. And becoming grievously infirm, he began to despair by reason of the multitude of his sins which he had committed in the world before entering the Order. And being thus in a woeful plight, he cried out to the Blessed Virgin, who appeared and comforted him,

whereby he was gladdened and changed. And being questioned by the Abbot about so sudden a change, he told him how the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to him. And the Abbot in wonder began to inquire whether he had ever done anything good for the sake of the Blessed Virgin. And he said "Whenever I heard her name, I never omitted to bend my knee in reverence to the Glorious Virgin Mary." And in this way the knight was saved.

LXXVI

The Devil appeared in many shapes to a certain girl in the house of her father and almost drove her mad, and she had determined to join the Cistercian Order. The Devil appeared to her at night urging upon her the pleasures of the world and wishing to turn her away from a religious life, foretelling all the hardships of that state. She replied: "What will happen to me if I die in those pleasures which you promise me?"

At those words the Devil was silent, and seizing the girl tried to throw her out of the window. But when she uttered the angel's salutation, the Devil let her go, saying: "If you go into religion, I will always be your adversary, and if you had not at this moment named that woman, I should have slain you." Saying that he changed to fleshly form, fiercely crushed the

maiden, and leaping out of the window never appeared again.

LXXVII

There was a certain Prior of the Order of Preachers who had many brothers in his convent who were devout in their prayers to the Blessed Virgin. Now it happened that one was more regular than others who came into it for study and quiet, in continual prayers day and night to the Virgin Mary, thus deserving to get consolation from her.

And it happened that when he was alone in the church he saw the Glorious Virgin Mary above the altar with her Son in great splendour. When he saw that, the brother was afraid it might be a phantom. Therefore he said in much reverence and humility of heart: "O most Glorious Mother and Lady, I am not worthy alone to enjoy this gift; I humbly beg of thee, if thou art truly the Mother of Christ, to appear also to this community in which are the true servants and most obedient lovers of thy grace." When he said that, the Mother of Piety consented and appeared to the whole convent in great splendour.

Now the brothers who saw this, declared that nothing more gladsome or more glorious could be seen by mortal eyes, and with tears they begged and prayed the most gracious Mother to appear a second and a third time as at first, fearing, that the first time it

had been a delusion of the Devil and might then be dispelled by earneſt prayer in the name of the Holy Mary and of the undivided Trinity. And as there can be no covenant of Chriſt or of the Mother of Chriſt with Belial, the glorious Mother of God shewed herself to the whole convent a second and a third time under the same form as before. Now these things happened in the beginning of that Order of monks so that by such and so spiritual a miracle the Queen of Mercy shewed her approval of the order devoted to her.

LXXVIII

A certain clerk of Paris who was very devoted to the Virgin Mary, for a long while ardently desired to see her beauty. Some time later an angel of the Lord appointed on behalf of the Virgin Mary saluted the clerk saying: "My Lady Mary, who is Lady Miſtress of angels and men, Queen of heaven and earth, has heard your prayers and sent word that on such a day and hour she will come to you and you shall see her, but know that if you see her any more, you will be blind." To that the clerk replied: "I will gladly lose my sight to deserve to see her once."

But after hearing the angel, he began to be anxious and to think: "What will you do after you have loſt your eyes? Then you will not be able to earn your bread by writing, but you will certainly be more

wretched and a beggar. And afterwards he thought within himself and said: "When the Blessed Mary comes, I will open one eye to see her and will close the other, and thus I shall lose one eye and, if one remains to me, it will be enough."

But when the Glorious Virgin appeared and he had looked upon such beauty and splendour as cannot be expressed in words or conceived in the heart, having placed his hand on one eye that he might not see her with that, afterwards he dropped his hand that he might look at her with both eyes, and the Blessed Virgin disappearing he saw her no more. Then having loſt one eye with which he had seen her, the other being left with which he had not seen her, he bitterly charged himself with cowardice, saying: "Why did I close one eye, wretched man, and not open both. Gladly would I be blind if I might see her more fully."

And after earneſtly praying for a long time to the Blessed Virgin that he might see her again because he would gladly lose the other eye, then she sent an angel who said: "The Lady of the Angels sends word to you of her coming, inasmuch as you wish to lose the other eye." And he replied: "Ay, lord, if I had a thousand eyes, I should choose to lose them for ever, if I might but see her perfectly with my second one." And the angel replied: "The moſt gracious lady sends word that you shall see her and shall not lose your remaining eye, and shall besides recover the one you loſt."

And, not long afterwards, all this so happened, and the Blessed Virgin Mary appearing, displayed herself to his sight and reſtored the loſt eye. From this we

may infer how great is the beauty of the Virgin Mary and how delightful it is to look upon her, about whom the holy Anselm has written in his *Meditations*: "Mary, thou art beautiful to gaze upon, desirable to embrace, delightful to see, for the greatest joy next to God is to look on thee and to take delight in thy praises."

LXXIX

There was a certain young man who was continually thinking upon and wondering at the beauty of the Mother of Jesus Christ every day and night. And when he wanted to go to sleep, he said: "Hail, Mary!" and commended his body and soul to the Blessed Virgin, praying that he might deserve to see her magnificent beauty in the court of heaven. And when he rose in the morning, again he commended himself to the Blessed Virgin, devoutly making the same prayer to her.

Now one morning as he finished his earnest prayer, there stood by him the Blessed Virgin Mary shewing to him her magnificent beauty and saying: "Do you desire to see my beauty?" And he replied: "O Queen of Heaven, unworthy as I am, with all my heart I desire it." Then the Blessed Virgin said: "Look on the comeliness with which He hath embellished me." And when he had looked, he said: "If I have to be separated from thy beauty, never

hereafter shall I be comforted." Said the Blessed Virgin Mary: "Since thou doſt love my beauty, I will now separate thy soul from thy body and thou shalt dwell with me and my Son for ever." And as she said this, the young man's soul was loosened from his body, and in the greateſt splendour he was carried away with the Blessed Virgin Mary and by the angels into heaven.

LXXX

Outside Chateauroux there is an abbey which is called Dôle, and on a pillar of that church there is a ſtone image carved in honour of the Blessed Virgin.

When a certain poor woman came to worship there, two approvers were present in the porch who taunted the woman and blasphemed the image. One even threw ſtones at the image, and ſtriking it with one broke the arm of the boy Jesus, and when the ſtone hand fell, drops of blood issued from the arm, as if it had been a living man. And at once he who had thrown the ſtone expired on the spot. But the other, going to gather the dying man in his arms to do what he could to help him, was immediately seized by a demon and died the following day.

Next day also a great multitude collected to see the image and the flowing of the blood, and, as they looked, that image tore its garments, that is, the ornament of ſtone which is about it, and bared the neck which was

encircled by a ſtone necklace, and the bosom as far as the breaſts because of the insult and outrage which had been inflicted on her and on her little Son. This happened in the year of our Lord 1275, at the time when there was war between King Philip of France and Henry King of England. [From Vincent, *Spec. Hiſt.*, li, viii, ch. XC.]

LXXXI

Once on a time the Saracens entered a church of St Mary and drove the points of their swords at the images of all the saints which were there painted on wood. They tore out the eyes of one, ſtruck off the nose or foot of another, gashing them all with their hellish points. On the image of the Holy Mary they struck madly, and although they all one after the other made the attempt, they were unable to move her: although they spent all their ſtrength in the attempt, they failed to shake her or in any other way to pull her down. [From Vincent, In *Spec. Hist.*, li. viii.]

LXXXII

There is a certain township near the city of Orleans which is called Aue, where the citizens have built a church in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Once when they were besieged by the enemy and were

distressed within the town, putting their trust rather in the aid of Mary the Mother of God than in their own strength, they went to the church with their little children and the women, and, standing devoutly before the image of the Holy Virgin Mary, with cries from heart and lips implored her help and when they had finished their tearful prayers, they returned to carry her image away and set it up in the gate to protect them and terrify their enemies.

Now, one of the citizens, standing on guard at the gate and from behind the image shooting arrows against the foe, caused much slaughter among the enemy. He being espied in his hiding-place by one of them, the enemy said wickedly: "You shall not escape death, nor shall the image be able to help you any longer, unless you desert the gate and make haste to throw open the city." And when this enemy hurled his javelin against the archer citizen, wonderful to say, the image raised its knee and putting it in the way of the javelin stopped it and thus protected the man devoted to her from the enemy's attack. He rejoicing in his wonderful delivery by the Virgin, at once aimed an arrow at his foe and struck down the blasphemer.

The rumour of the miracle done spread through the people and even reached the enemy. By the acclamations of all it was asserted that the Holy Mother of God was fighting for the citizens of the place. The enemy hearing this consented to a peace. They visited the church of our Lady offering rich gifts and declared before witnesses that in future they would do no harm to that place, and to this day that image

protects them, and it remains in the same place, still carrying the javelin on its raised knee. [From Vincent, *Spec. Hyst.*, li., viii, 83].

LXXXIII

A certain painter painted the Devil with horns and other members as ugly as he could and still more dreadful. But the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary he painted as comely and beautiful as he could in different colours.

Now the devil being enraged at this and envious, went in haste to the painter and asked him why he painted him so dreadfully ugly and the Virgin so comely and beautiful. He replied that the reality was as shown in the painted picture. But the Devil in his rage one day was going to hurl the painter from the height, where he painted the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and he broke up the wooden scaffold on which the painter stood, who began to fall, but at once the image of the Gracious Virgin stretched forth its hand to the painter and firmly held him from falling and so protected him from the demon.

LXXXIV

There is another church of the Mother dedicated to St Michael on the Mount, which is called Tumba. Now it happened once on a time that that church was

set on fire by the judgment of God through lightning that fell on it from heaven. Moreover, there was there an image of the Blessed Virgin made of wood having a head-covering like a mitre.

When, therefore, the fire reached the place where that image was, it consumed everything in a circle round it. But the image itself was left altogether untouched, as though the fire was afraid of it, so that even the white covering it wore on its head could by no means be darkened by the vapour of the smoke. Actually a single feather from the wings of a peacock escaped, that was caught in the image, a very sufficient proof of the miracle, that she protected its image from fire, shewing that she can easily deliver her servants from everlasting fire.

LXXXV

A figure of the holy Virgin Mary had been designed and shaped by the hands of Luke the Evangelist but not yet coloured, when suddenly the figure was found blazing with a wonderful adornment beyond the power of earthly hands and painted by the skill of Almighty God.

After some time that image, not, we believe, without the agency of God, was brought to Rome by a man full of the divine spirit. At the same time there lived at Rome three brothers, Tempulus, Servulus

and Cervulus, who dwelt in the place at that time called St Agatha's in the Tower. To one of these men, Tempulus, the Lord appeared saying: "Beſtir thyself to obtain the image of the famous Virgin from the man who is bringing it to Rome and be careful to place it very reverently in the church which is near to thy door." And this was done. And so the three aforesaid brothers lived there up to the end of their lives very devoutly.

Afterwards some clerks, excited by envy, induced the Pope Sergius to have the venerated image placed in the Lateran palace; for consulting their own avarice they said that a great work should be put in a great place. Coming, therefore, with a numerous company of people in spite of the reſiſtance with much sorrow of the handmaids of God, who lived there in chaſtity and under rule, they took away that moſt sacred image and came to a place called Splen. There, being dismayed by terrible lightning and crashing thunder from heaven, they dared not move a step further.

When he knew of this, that pontiff was ſtricken with exceeding great fear, and reverently approaching that place where the image, supposed to have been painted by the hands of angels, was ſtopping, he prayed to the Lord for awhile, and then rising from prayer bore it by himself as far as the Lateran palace and there with great reverence placed it.

The following night by an amazing and incomprehensible miracle that image was carried back by divine agency to the same place. When this was known, the aforesaid prelate finding it out, came devoutly, overcome with divine love, to the holy

church. And inquiring diligently of the handmaids of God who lived there, at what hour that night they had seen it reſtored to its former place, the Abbeſs, of whose integrity and holiness of life there could be no doubt, weeping profusely, fell at the feet of the Pope, saying: "Verily, in the middle of the night, as I was troubled exceedingly with sorrow by reason of the loss of the figure of my only miſtress and was praying with outſtretched arms to Almighty God for my sins, I saw her enter as on wings and eagerly set herself up in her place."

Now the Pope with those who were far the wiſeſt of his counsellors, searching deeply into it and not despising so remarkable a miracle, in the sight of those who were present took blame on himself and in that place celebrated a solemn mass with great devotion. Afterwards he liberally granted large donations to the house of the all-powerful one, and for keeping up the lights in the church he allotted sufficient oil for the worship of that image through his servants of the Lateran Palace for all time.

LXXXVI

That envier of the good, the Devil, who dares to set himſelf againſt the Lord of the Universe, made an attack with his hoſts upon the brothers of the Order of Preachers at Bologna and at Paris. For, as was said by those who were present, they made one man see

a burning furnace falling on his head, before another they put the figure of a wanton woman trying to embrace him, before another an ass with horns, to ſtill another they brought a fiery serpent, others they afflicted with all kinds of delusions and scourges so much so that by reason of these hurtful fancies and devils' mockeries they were compelled to take turns in watching over the reſt of the brothers at night when they slept. Moreover, some fell into madness and others were terribly harassed.

Putting their hopes, therefore, in that matchless life-giver, Mary, moſt powerful and tender, the brothers determined that there should be a solemn procession singing: "Blessings on Thee, Queen", in honour of her after Compline. At once, therefore, the delusions were chased away and the trouble cured. And one brother, the son of a prince, who was mad, was wholly reſtored. And then all went well with the Order.

Moreover, such a procession was declared to be well-pleasing to God and His Mother by the gathering to it of the people, the devotion of the clergy, the sweet tears and pious sighs, and the wonderful visions. For many when the brothers were going out to the altar of the Blessed Virgin, saw (and told the tale of it) how the Virgin herself with a hoſt of the dwellers above advanced from the higheſt heavens. And when they bowed at the words "Sweet Mary," she likewise bowed as they did, and when they went back, she also returned to heaven.

LXXXVII

When the " Salve, Regina " first came into notice, in a certain place many ladies sang it, and one of them, in particular, who was very devout, loved to sing that antiphon. And, behold one day a little bird brought it written on a paper and flew to the place where she worshipped. And she being much gladdened offered thanks with all her heart to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

LXXXVIII

In Lombardy, as monks were singing the " Salve, Regina " in honour of the Blessed Virgin in the usual manner, and they had come to the place where it was said : " And the Blessed Jesus, the fruit of thy womb ", the hearts of many present being fired with spiritual grace, behold the Blessed Virgin appeared with her Son, saying : " Dearest sons, sing heartily and offer praise, for I will shew to you my Son Jesus now and in the future ", and having said this she shewed her fair Son to them.

And when the Choirmaster saw he fell into an ecstasy in the sight of all so that he had to be carried, and for a long time shewed his joy. This miracle through their lowliness of heart for many years they forbore to make known. But when it was published to the glory and honour of the Glorious Virgin, a great number of people flocked thither, but, whether they were busied with guests or other duties, they would

not neglect the " Salve Regina " but at once hastened to salute her, hoping to be rewarded by her with great blessing and profit of her answering salutation.

LXXXIX

A certain priest was wont at all hours to say the antiphon " Salve Regina ". And on a certain occasion, as he was passing through the open country to visit a cloistered nun living alone near the church, there was thunder so violent that he lost the power of walking. But at last with much effort and fear coming to the church, he threw himself down before the altar and made earnest plaint because of the storm to the Virgin Mary, our Lady.

And behold a matron with the countenance of a virgin and wondrous beauty spoke to him saying: " Because thou dost sing heartily and often the antiphon " Salve Regina ', the lightnings with fear of which thou art troubled, shall not hurt thee." And so returning to the altar, she disappeared before his eyes, and immediately he understood that it was the tender-hearted, loving, and sweet Mary. [From Cesarius.]

XC

A woman who was in peril of childbirth for seven days and turning black had been given up by everyone, made a vow to the Blessed Francis and with her dying breath began to implore his aid.

Now after uttering this prayer she fell asleep, and in her sleep she saw the Blessed Francis addressing her with kindly words and asking whether she knew his face and if she knew how to recite the " Salve Regina " in honour of the Glorious Virgin. When she replied that she had knowledge of both, St Francis began that antiphon of the Glorious Virgin that is the " Salve Regina ". And as she uttered in prayer the words : " The fruit which the Virgin brought forth ", at once she was delivered from all her pains, and she brought forth a fine child and she offered thanksgiving to the Queen of Heaven who through the merits of the Blessed Francis deigned to pity her.

XCI

There was a certain regular canon, who being on the point of death was in fear of that passage in *Eccles* ix. : " A man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred, yet doth he despair." And the most blessed Virgin in visible form with kindly words addressed him saying : " Fear not ; thou shalt never be lost ; nay since thou hast often honoured me with the antiphon ' Salve Regina ', so shalt thou be crowned in the kingdom of my Son with me and all the Saints." And after he had joyfully told his brothers, he proved the reality of the vision by the certainty of what happened afterwards, for the next day he expired in much assurance of salvation. Such favours shall every

man share who in private or in public shall be careful to praise her in the antiphon " Salve Regina ".

XCII

In the Carthusian Order there was at one time much tribulation by God's permission so that hardly could any one endure the rule. And a faſt being appointed, they besought the Lord with earneſt prayer that he would deign to shew them some saving remedy, and lo! one moſt holy father had an answer from heaven that the office: " Hail Holy Mother " should be said after the office for the day; and when this was done all tribulation then ceased, and the Order continued to flourish in great vigour. Hence many religious made frequent use of that office and ſtill do.

XCIII

There was a certain half-witted prieſt who knew no mass but that of the Blessed Lady Mary. Celebrating this mass every day and being accused of so doing, he was forbidden by the Bishop to celebrate any mass in future.

Being in trouble and need, he called upon the Blessed Virgin and she appeared to him saying: "Go to the Bishop and tell him from me to restore your office to you." The priest replied: "Our Lady, I am a poor man and a person of no account. He will not listen to me, nor shall I be allowed to approach him." Then the Blessed Virgin added: "Go, and I will prepare the way for you." He said: "O Lady Virgin Mary, he will not believe me." And she replied: "You shall say to him, as a sign that at such an hour and in such a place, while he was mending his hair shirt, I held it on one side to help him, and he will at once believe you."

In the morning entering without hindrance the priest came to the Bishop carrying the message of the Blessed Mother of God. When he said: "How am I to believe that you are sent by her," he added that sign referring to the hair shirt. Hearing this the prelate in amazement and alarm replied: "Behold I allow you again to celebrate and repeat the mass for our Lady the Blessed Virgin and that alone; and pray for me."

XCIV

It should be noted that as you will say the Sunday is dedicated to the Resurrection and the sixth day to the Passion of the Lord, so also you will say that the Sabbath is dedicated to the Glorious Virgin Mary:

and this for many reasons. Firſtly because the ſuffering of the Saints is wont to be celebrated on fixed days. Now the Blessed Virgin, although she did not suffer martyrdom of the flesh, yet suffered martyrdom of the spirit. According to the passage in *Luke* ii: "A sword shall pierce through thy soul." And that martyrdom was continued for her throughout the sixth day and on the following Sabbath. But the sixth day is dedicated to the martyrdom of her Son and therefore the Sabbath following was rightly dedicated to the martyrdom of the Merciful one. Secondly, because as on the Sabbath day God reſted from all His work, so Chriſt entering into the womb of Mary, reſted in her body and soul. For in no other of the Saints had the Holy Spirit complete reſt, but in Chriſt and the Virgin Mary. For in the other saints he found something at variance with himself, at the leaſt some venial fault; but in Chriſt and the Virgin Mary he found nothing at variance and therefore there had complete reſt. Thirdly, because God blessed the Sabbath day. Thus the Blessed Virgin was blessed by all. For the Father chose her for daughter, the Son for mother, the Holy Ghoſt for bride. And she was blessed by the angel who saluted her; and by all the world which reverences and praises her. Fourthly because the Sabbath comes between the day of joy, that that is, Sunday, and the day of pain, that is the sixth day. So, too, does she mediate between God and man. Fifthly, because on the Sabbath day all hope perished and remained alive in the Virgin alone, and therefore was this day deservedly dedicated to her.

PLATE VIII

VIRGIN AND CHILD.

Köln, c. 1230.)

[*face p.* 122

XCV

It is written in a dialogue of Cesarius that a certain young man whose father at death had left to him great riches gave his mind to jouſts and worldly vanities, so as to squander all his property in fine raiment and horses, selling to a knight who lived near him much of it, and mortgaging another part, and then resolving to leave his country.

And his ſteward seeing him said to him: "Maſter, why are you sad? Do you wish to become rich?" He answered that he would gladly: "If I may have riches with God's will." The ſteward replied: "Follow me, and it shall be well with you." The maſter at once followed his ſteward and he brought him through a wood into a marshy place where the ſteward began to talk to the Devil. His maſter in a fright asked him with whom he talked. He answered: "With the Devil." The young man was ſtill more afraid. And the ſteward said to the Devil: "I have brought to you a nobleman; and I beg you to reſtore to him his former riches." And the Devil said: "If he is willing to be devoted to me, I will give him riches and honours beyond all his kinsmen and neighbours." Said the ſteward: "He will gladly be obedient and faithful to you, if he may have these." Then the Devil said: "He muſt renounce the Higheſt." The young man refusing to do this, the ſteward said: "Why are you afraid to utter juſt the one word 'I renounce'?" At laſt the young man yielded to the persuasion of the ſteward and denied the Higheſt. To whom the Devil said: "Your task is ſtill unfinished.

You must also renounce the Mother of the Highest, for she is the one that causes us the greatest loss. Those whom the Son condemns by righteous judgment, she brings to him in mercy and forgiveness."

At that the young man was exceedingly afraid, and troubled beyond measure he replied: "That I will never do." "Why, then," said the steward, "have you done what is worse? Do now what is less. You have denied your Creator. Deny now the creature too." But he replied: "I will never deny her even if I had to remain a beggar for ever."

And so they went back without finishing the business, and on the way they came to a church half-enclosed, where the young man, leaping from his horse gave it to his steward to hold and entered there before dawn. And standing by the altar of the Blessed Virgin holding her Son in her arms he began to pray to her from the bottom of his heart. Now above that altar there was an image of her holding the Son in her bosom. And behold the true morning-star by the merits of that brightest star of the sea began to rise in the heart of that young man. At last the Lord for the honour done to his mother whom he had not denied, deigned to grant him repentance so that he groaned aloud with weeping and in lamentation filled the church with his cries.

That same hour came too the afore-mentioned knight, who had his property in pledge and, seeing the door of the church open and thinking divine service was going on, entered. And finding the young man, well-known to him, weeping before the altar, and, supposing he was weeping for his poverty, he secretly

crept away behind a pillar, waiting to see the outcome of the matter. And as the young man earnestly called on the Blessed Virgin and dared not call on the Most High God whom he had denied, in the hearing of both men the image of the Blessed Virgin spoke to her Son, whom she held in her arms, in these words. "Sweetest Son, pity this man." But the Child made no reply to His Mother, but turned away His face. And when she again implored her Son on behalf of the man, the Child turned His back to His Mother saying: "Has he not denied me? What am I to do for him?"

After these words the image of the Blessed Virgin arose and placed the boy Jesus on the altar and fell down on her face before His feet and said: "I beg you, my Son, for my sake to remit his sins." At once the infant raising his Mother replied to her: "Mother I could never deny thee anything. Behold for thy sake I wholly remit his sin," and the young man rising went out of the church in sadness about his fault, but glad at his forgiveness.

After him went out secretly that knight beforementioned and, as though he knew nothing, he asked him why his eyes were so wet. And he replied: "The wind is the cause." Then said he: "Sir, I am not ignorant of the cause of your sadness. I have an only daughter. If you wish to take her to wife, with her I will give you back all your goods, and I will besides make you heir to my own wealth."

To this the young man made glad reply: "If you should deign to do this for me, it would please me exceedingly." And so the knight returned to his wife and told her the matter throughout, and, she

agreeing, the nuptials were celebrated. As dowry they restored to the young man all his property, and thereafter the young man, all the days of his life gave thanks to the Blessed Virgin Mary and faithfully served her up to his death, for through her he obtained remission of his sins and, moreover, the comfort of worldly possessions.

XCVI

It is written in a dialogue of Cesarius that in the neighbourhood of the city of Trent there is a wood frequented by a very notorious robber, by whom many people were plundered, who were slain if they attempted to defend themselves and could not.

Having, however, one day met a monk of the Order of Preachers and hoping he possessed and carried with him money, the robber said: "Unless you follow me willingly I shall kill you." The monk following him and on the way asking him who he was, or what was his business, he replied: "I am that famous robber," telling him his name. And when the monk said to him: "You have begun to grow grey-bearded. Do you not fear danger to your soul?" he replied: "No more than a brute beast," and the monk was silent.

But coming to his cave, he said within himself: "If I could convert this man, I should do a great service for God." And he said to the robber: "May

I ask you a question ? " The other replying that he might, the monk added : " What sort of life was yours at the beginning ? " The other replied. " Very bad. When I was a boy I fought with all my companions. When I became a young man, I busied myself with thieving. After that, going on to manhood, I engaged in brigandage, in which I was so successful that to-day I am the head and master of all the brigands in this province." To which the monk replied : " Do you not fear the everlasting punishment prepared for such works ? " And the other saying : " There is no question about my soul, for it is lost ", the monk replied ; " But if I could shew you a way of salvation, would you be willing to take my advice or not ? " Said the robber that he would agree to do so, and then the other : " Fast one day a week in honour of Mary the holy Mother of God and do no hurt to any one on that day, and for certain you will obtain favour with her Son." The robber replied : " Verily I will do this. Also I vow that on that day I will eat nothing and will rob no man and harm no woman." And he chose the Sabbath day, doing no evil on that day, and even saved very many from being plundered by the hands of his comrades or slain, all in honour of the Virgin Mary.

On that same day the people of Trent were attacked all around by their enemies, and when the troops of the city made a sortie and pursued the enemy on the Saturday, they took that robber, being unarmed because it was Saturday, with the rest.

And although he was very valiant, he did not defend himself when taken, nor did he plead for

himself and would not answer their questions when led away. Coming to the city he was soon recognised and condemned to the gallows. By the will of God, as is believed, the judges, moved by the beauty of his person, agreed to let him live if he abjured the province. This he refused to do saying: "I will not do it. For it is better that I should atone for my sins now than in the future." They replied: "But suppose you are beheaded?" "I do not care", said he, "what the punishment is, so long as I am killed." But they said: "Do you wish to have a priest summoned?" "It is not necessary, for you are all Christians. To all of you I confess my sins which I have ever committed in this present life."

Having done that, he bore witness in much penitence that he had never done anything good except that fast which he had been taught by the monk. And so, being led outside the city, he was beheaded and buried on the spot.

The same night the watchmen at the gate saw heavenly lights shine forth around his grave. For five matrons, digging up his body and fitting the head to the body, placed it on a bier wonderfully made, and covered with a purple pall, four of them having each a burning candle in her hand and lifting the bier at its four corners. The fifth, the most beautiful of all of them, following with a candle, they came to the gate of the city and there laid down the body.

And so the watchmen, seeing these things, were afraid, supposing it was a delusion; but one of the women said to them: "Tell your bishop to give honourable and reverent burial in such a place in the

church to my chaplain beheaded by you ", adding threats, should they disregard the command, and she gave her name as Mary.

But in the morning when the message was given to the Bishop, going forth with the clergy and people he took off the pall and when he saw the head that had been cut off, united to the body, he was exceedingly afraid, wondering at the fabric of the pall, which surpassed all human workmanship, and he believed what had been related to him, and in much fear and honour he buried the man not as a robber but as a martyr of Chrift in the place appointed for such. Since that time, therefore, hardly can a single grown person be found in that province who does not faft in honour of Our Lady on the Saturday after his example.

XCVII

There lived in Britain a certain young nobleman who, although given up to the world, was devoted to the Blessed Virgin so far as to pay to her every day thrice fifty salutations.

A sickness into which he fell brought him to the gate of death. And, after lying a long time, he came to life again, and crying out said to the woman sitting by him : " Quickly call a prieft." And when the prieft came, before them all he declared : " I was carried away before the tribunal of Chrift and with three

others was gravely accused by devils; and sentence must have been given against me but the most loving Mother of Christ asked her Son that I might return to the body to find room for repentance. This was done, and one of my sins was that I had deprived the priest of the tithes from my lands and goods; a second, that with my comrades I had stolen fish from men of religion; the third, that I had trampled down the crops of the poor with my hunting dogs.

To that charge the countrymen who had suffered loss through him said: "Why must you, master, be condemned for this, when we have freely forgiven you?" But he said: "Your forgiveness is not enough to give me salvation, for I had greater wealth wherewith to pay than had ye to lose." Saying this, he ordered the losses to be made good, and so departed.

XCVIII

There was a certain noble who was an utter tyrant to those of alien blood. When, therefore, they all besought God for revenge on him, it happened that he fell ill unto death.

Summoning, therefore, the Bishop of the place, he made sincere confession, and begged of him to pray to God for his recovery, first taking an oath that in future he would do no hurt to any one. When he became better he did worse harm to all alike, so that all cursed not only him but the Bishop as well.

Afterwards, again falling sick, he was afflicted with a fever sent by God as before, so that all his limbs were on fire and he despaired of his life. Therefore he summoned the Bishop, promising satisfaction for not keeping his oath and asking him again to pray for him to be whole. But he indignantly refused and went away.

But as death approached he cried out and looked up to heaven, and there he saw suspended in the air the Son of God on the Cross and His Mother standing near him and praying for him. But Jesus said: "Mother, I cannot do this, for behold he has crucified me afresh", and he shewed her his bloody wounds. Seeing this the sinner groaned, crying out with a loud voice: "Good Jesus if I have crucified Thee in my sins, yet I have always honoured Thy Mother." For he had fasted every Saturday in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. And as he thus cried out, he heard the voice of Jesus saying to his mother who prayed: "Behold, Mother, I have given him to you"; and he was healed.

Afterwards, having sold all his goods, he restored what he had taken, and entered a cloister where he served God and the Blessed Virgin Mary until the end of his life.

XCIX

A brother of the Carthusian Order, compelled by the love of God and His Mother, made a rosary for the

faithful to repeat their devotions to our Glorious Lady, the Holy Mary, because such salvation and grace is hidden in such, more than we have known hitherto. For one of the Priors in the house of the Carthusian Order at Treves who died in the year of our Lord 1431 left among his writings a tale of one of them who was accuſtomed to use this particular rosary.

He was led in the spirit to the heights of heaven where, among many myſteries which he heard and saw, clearer than all he perceived that same rosary being presented before the Moſt High and the Moſt Blessed Virgin Mary with her virgins, all the angels, and the whole of the Saints who had gone to Heaven from Adam until the present time, drawing near and giving thanks to Almighty God and blessing Him for the holy use of that rosary made in heaven and in earth and praying for all religious and devout men who use it that grace and peace may be added to them in this world and that glory may be theirs in heaven.

Also he saw and heard how all those saints and angels of God with great devotion recited that rosary with its meditations, adding to any meditation or clause having the name of Jesus Chriſt, Alleluia with cheerful song. For as often as the name of the Moſt Blessed Virgin Mary was there named, they humbly made obeisance and at the name of Jesus with greateſt devotion all and each bent the knee according to the words of the Apoſtle: "At the name of Our Lord Jesus Chriſt every knee shall bend of those in heaven, on earth and below the earth."

He was also told in clear and plain speech that as often as any one has repeated that rosary with its

added meditations, so often would he receive full remission of his sins. He saw also countless beautiful bright, imperishable, and fragrant crowns which are reserved for those who use these devotions. And a crown of that sort is given whenever a man makes or says such a garland to the praise of God or His Mother. Also not once only but many times in one day did he see and hear such heavenly joys.

And whenever in the body he received the consolation and the comfort of Mary, it came of his devout use of that rosary. And, although he has not spoken of himself in his writings, we have no doubt that he was that good man who wrote of these things. For such was his conduct among the brothers, such his piety, patience, learning, grace and courage, even in the body, strictly disciplined as it was, that above all others he deserved to have visions of this kind. Yet so well did he know how to conceal wisely what he had learnt from heaven that he shewed in his dealings with the brotherhood no aloofness, but made himself a comfort and a help to all.

Again, then, we most earnestly beseech the lovers of God and his Mother that, like as the saints in heaven take delight in so doing, they should use this devout exercise of the rosary and teach it to others and spread the knowledge of it among men learned and lay alike, in Latin or the vulgar tongue: that in like measure as they resolve so to do, so much may the peace of God and the joy of the Saints be increased, when this is more widely known by men of piety.

NOTES

I

LIST AND CHRONOLOGY OF AUTHORS AND MANUSCRIPTS REFERRED TO IN THESE NOTES

Gregory of Tours (594)
Paschasius Radbert (865)
Peter Damian (988 to 1072)
The author of *Sermo de Conceptione* wrongly ascribed to Anselm of Canterbury (13th century)
Sigebert (1112)
Guibert de Nogent (d. 1124)
Honorius of Autun (after 1130)
Jacques de Vitry (writings 1226 to 1240)
Caesarius of Heisterbach (1240)
Étienne de Bourbon (1261)
Vincent de Beauvais (1264)
Thomas Cantimpratanus (1280)
Étienne de Besançon (1294)
Jacobus a Voragine (1298)
Johannes Gobii (First half of 14th century)
Gil de Zamora (14th century)
MSS Paris Bibliothèque Nationale Latin 14463 (12th century)
„ 12593 (13th „)
„ 18134 (13th „)
British Museum Cleop. c. 20 (12th century)
Oxford Balliol Library 240 (12th to 13th century)
Toulouse 482 (12th century)
Toulouse 482 (12th century)
Admont Steiermark 16 (12th century)

II

1. From Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Hiſtoriale*, VII, 90-92; Étienne de Bourbon, *De Septem Donis*; Étienne de Besançon, *Alphabetum Narrationum*; John de Garlandia; and a large number of MSS.

2. Vincent of Beauvais (VII, 85) probably took this ſtory from a MS. containing an old group of English origin that connected each tale with one of the elements. There are versions in Ét. de Bourbon, *De Sept. Don.*, Brit. Mus. Cleop. c. 20., Oxf. Ball. Libr. 240, Camb. Univ. Libr. Mm. 6. 15.

3 (a). Also from Vincent, VII, 17, although not cited by Herolt. The ſtory was contained in the *Magnum Exordium* of the Ciſtercian Order, sec. 5, ch. 5, and was told by Arnold, Abbot of Beaulieu, who again had it from a prior "Calacensis monaſterii", an eyewitness "in territorio Lemovicensi".

3 (b). The ſtory of Murieldis, belonging to the "Ad laudem" group, is with the reſt of that group, found in a great number of collections.

4. Pez, No. 23.

5. From Caesarius, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, IX, 49, although not acknowledged. One of Wright's *Latin Stories*, No. 109. In Pez No. 6, the robber's name is Eppo. It belongs to the "Ad laudem" group, and is found in very many MSS.

6. From the *Exordium Magnum Ciſterciensis Ordinis*. sec. IV, ch. II, the author of which was Abbot Conrad of Eberbach. In the *Exordium* the name of the old knight-monk is given as Rainald. Herolt's version is more dramatic, but the *Exordium* adds that before his death Mary appeared to Rainald bringing him coſtly robes, and that the miracle occurred at Clairvaux. The ſtory is told in almoſt identical terms in the *De Miraculis* of Herbert, Bishop of Torres, Sardinia. Herolt's authority is probably Caesarius of Heiſterbach, who again took the tale from the *Exordium*, adding certain details such as that of the towel to wipe away the sweat on the monks' faces, and changing Elizabeth into Anna. The incident also illuſtrates a sermon of St Bernard, where it is ascribed to a Ciſtercian of Clairvaux, perhaps Helinand. See also Étienne de Bourbon, VII, 107.

7. From Gregory (604), *Libri Miraculorum de Gloria Martyrum*, ch. 9. It is found, too, in Vincent, *Spec. Hiſt.*, ch. 81.

8. This is a variant of the story of the three trumps told in No. 9, which again is taken from Caesarius, XII, 58. In a picture dated 1517 in the National Museum at Munich angels aim arrows, dying and dead lie on the ground, but God the Father at the prayers of Christ and the Saints sheathes his sword.

9. It was a custom in the Middle Ages for a trumpet to be sounded at the door of a man condemned to death.

10. Caesarius, *Dial. Mir.*, VII, 2.

11. Another variant of 8 and 9.

12. From the "Ad laudem" group, Pez No. 4; also Voragine, CXIX, 2. Although Herolt numbers only five woes, Gelenius asserted that in 1444 in his own time the Seven Woes were established in the collegiate church of St George in Cologne. Beissel in his book on the Virgin Mary suggests that a brotherhood was there founded which afterwards changed itself to a Brotherhood of the Seven Woes. The legend occurs in many MSS.

13. A different legend on the origin of the Five or Seven Joys given both by Caesarius and Voragine. A religious in his prayers sought to comfort Mary for her sorrow over the five wounds of her Son, telling her to rejoice over her immaculate virginity, the message of the angel, etc. To the religious in his last illness and consequent fears there appeared Mary encouraging him who had preached comfort, now to rejoice himself. In MSS. of the fourteenth century two heavenly Joys, Mary's ascension into Heaven and her Crowning, were added. Later, the Five became Seven, varied in their content and including both earthly and heavenly Joys. In a Prague fourteenth century MS. a hymn sings first Seven earthly and then Seven heavenly Joys (See Beissel, ch. XXIX).

14. From Voragine, *Legenda Aurea*, CXXXI, 4.

15. Taken without acknowledgment from Caesarius, VII, 45.

17. Told by Guibert de Nogent in *De Pignoribus Sanctorum*, Bk. I, ch. 2, but in Guibert the offering is made by an acolyte and the details are not so picturesque. There is a similar story in Gautier de Cluny (or Compiègne) *De Mirac.* B.V.M., 3, which exactly agrees with the Paris MS. 14463. A version of it is related in the life of Hermann Joseph (d. 1230 at Steinfeld), but the child Hermann offers an apple and Mary stretches out her hand to take it for her son.

18. From Gregory of Tours, *Libr. Mir. de Gloria Martyrum*, ch. 10. The legend is also found in Paschasius Radbert (865), *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini*, IX, 8, where the Jew boy is son of a glassmaker: Sigebert Gemblacensis (1112) has it in his *Chronicles* and Honorius of Autun (post 1130) in his *Speculum Ecclesiae*.

19. From Vincent, *Spec. Hist.*, VII, 99.

20. One of the "Ad laudem" group.

21. This is one of Jacques de Vitry's *Exempla* (see T. F. Crane's edition, Notes, p. 257). The story is a longer variant of No. 83, where the devil revenges himself by hurling the painter from the scaffold. In Caesarius, VII, 34, the name of the nun Beatrix is given, but not that of the monk Hieronymus, as here. This is also No. 47 in Wright's *Latin Stories*. Étienne de Bourbon takes it from Jacques de Vitry. There are other versions in Rutebeuf (ed. Jubinal, 1, 302), Méon, *Nouveau Recueil*, II, 54, Gudin, *Hist. des Contes*, 1, 65. It is also found in Robert of Brunné's *Handlyng Synne*, p. 402, and Weber cites it in *Vie des Anciens Pères*, p. 31; Mussafia refers it to MS. Paris Bib. Nat. Lat. 18134.

22. From Vincent VII, 102, and it occurs in Scala Celi, *Virgo Dei Genetrix*.

23. A similar episode in the story of the Roman Empress in No. 1.

24. A fuller account of the story is included in the Pez collection and in most of the larger ones. Vincent has it in VII, 86 of the *Speculum Historiale*, Etienne de Besançon in his *Alphabetum Narrationum*. It is No. 58 of Wright's *Latin Stories*.

25. The complete story is told in Caesarius (1226 to 1240), *Dial Mirac.*, VII, 34, ed. Strange. The shortened form of it occurs in Jacques de Vitry's (1180 to 1240) *Exempla* No. LX.

26. Caesarius, VII, 27.

27. One form of the favourite "Mary and Bridegroom" theme and taken by Herolt from the version in Caes., *Dial. Mir.*, VII, 32. The original of a number of variants is the earlier legend found in the *Sermo de Conceptio Beate Virginis Marie*, formerly ascribed to St Anselm of Canterbury, but now generally considered spurious, although it may be by his nephew. In it, as in Herolt, the chief character is a cleric, brother of the Count of Anjou. A more interesting and artistic version occurs in Herolt's No. 38, where an uncle is the adviser who

rewards the knight with the hand of his daughter; but the nuptials are never completed through the death of the bridegroom. Offering some differences is the one told by Voragine in the *Legenda Aurea*, CXXXI, 6.

29. Henricus is in other versions Leuricus, e.g. Pez 38.

30. Caesarius, VII, 23.

32. From Vincent, VII, 84. In Pez No. 30 a sick monk is thus healed.

33. Vincent gives this story in his *Spec. Hist.* with the ascription: "Johannes Damascenus; ex gestis ejus". The Dominican John Gobii has it in the *Scala Celi*, and may have taken it from Vincent.

34. More briefly narrated but with particulars of name and place in the MS. Paris Bib. Nat. Lat. 12593. It is also found in Vincent, *Spec. Hist.*, VII, 98.

35. This tale appears in Guibert de Nogent's *De Laude S.M.*, but at greater length and with the addition of the temptation of Peter by the Devil in the form of a woman. Peter uses a stole to drive the Devil away, and, having become a hermit, afterwards by the advice of the Bishop of Grenoble and Viviers goes into a monastery, but Guibert throws doubt on the last fact.

36. Étienne de Bourbon (1261) has the story in *De Septem Donis*, and says that it happened in the County of Nevers in 1225. It is to be found in the twelfth century MS. Paris Bib. Nat. Lat. 14463.

37. From Caesarius, *Dial. Mir.*, VII, 48.

38. The longer and more interesting form of the "Mary and Bridegroom" tale. See No. 27.

39. Generally found with the next tale of shipwreck. Taken here from Vincent's *Spec. Hist.*, VII, 89.

40. The Elsinus legend much altered. It is found in the Pseudo-Anselm *Sermo de Conceptione*. Its connection with the Conception Feast was no doubt set up after the origin of the story. In the sermon Elsinus, Bishop of Ramsey, was sent overseas on a mission by William of England to negotiate with the Danes who were threatening an invasion because of the Norman Conquest. In the storm a figure in priestly garments swam to the ship and promised safety to Elsinus if he would undertake to institute the Conception Feast. The story occurs in

Vincent, *Spec. Hist.*, VII, 89, cited by Herolt as his authority, and in many collections, but is naturally omitted in the *Legenda Aurea*, because Voragine took sides with Bernard in opposition to the Conception Feast. See Migne, *Patrologia*, CLIX, 328.

41. From Caesarius, *Dial. Mir.*, VII, 28.

42. One of the few legends that can be traced step by step from an origin in the East to reception and universal popularity in the West. It was first told in Greek by Eutychianus writing before 572, who asserted that he was the "servant and companion" of Theophilus, who died in 538. The story was copied by Simeon Metaphrastes and then found its way to the western world through a translation into Latin by Paul, Deacon of Naples, in the ninth century. In 1123 the Bishop of Rheims put it into verse, as also in Germany did Hroswitha, a nun in the cloister of the Benedictines at Gandersheim, her legend being entitled *The Fall and Conversion of the Viscount Theophilus* and the story, as worked up by Hroswitha, was frequently referred to in sermons in Germany. In secular literature there are frequent references to it, and it is the subject of an early French play, *Le Miracle de Théophile*, by Rutebeuf, a jongleur and trouvère of the thirteenth century (recently edited by Grace Frank: Paris, Champion). It is told again in Hartmann's discussion of the Creed, in the Low German Paraphrase of *The Song of Solomon* by Brun of Schönebeck (1276), in a Netherland poem of the fourteenth century and in *Scala Celi* under "Ambitio". In art the Theophilus legend is frequently portrayed in illuminated manuscripts and in Church sculpture. "The significance of its universal popularity", says Beissel, "lies in the conviction of the Middle Ages that even the greatest sinner finds pardon through the intercession of Mary." Its connection with the Faust legend is obvious.

Herolt probably took the tale from Vincent, *Spec. Hist.*, XXI, 69, but it is found too in Honorius of Autun (post 1130) 43. From Caes., *Dial. Mir.*, VII, 57.

46. From Thomas Cantimpratanus (1280), De Apibus, Bk. II, 25.

47. From Guibert de Nogent, *De Laude S.M.*, ch. 12, who notes that another version has been told to him by the Bishop of Arras. Gautier of Cluny (or Compiègne), *De Miraculis B.V.M.*, 2 has another with variations but in the main like G. de N. (See Migne, *Patrol. Lat.*, Vol. 173, p. 1379.) There is another in Vincent, *Spec. Hist.*, VII, 100.

48. A variant of 46.

51. An " Ad laudem " legend, Pez No. 11, and in many MSS.
52. A variant of Thomas Cantimpratanus, *De Apibus*, Bk. II, 18.
53. The story is told as above by Thos. Cant., *De Ap.*, II, 18, and in *Scala Celi, Virgo dei Genetrix.*
55. Cf. Étienne de Bourbon (1261), *De Sept. Don.*, Pt. II, which is longer.
56. From St Anselm of Canterbury (1109, Oratio XLIV (Migne CLXVIII, 946). The tale is found in the *Tractatus de Conceptione B.V.M.* and the Pseudo-Anselm, *Sermo de Conceptione*; also in Honorius of Autun's, *Spec. Ecclesiae* (after 1130). It occurs in Paris MS. Bib. Nat. Lat. 14463 word for word as in Anselm.
58. Cf. Peter Damian, *De Bono Suffragiorum*, Ch. II, where the name of the monk is given as Bassus and the authority as Stephanus Cardinalis Presbyter. An " Ad laudem " legend, Pez 7.
61. Cf. Vincent de Beauvais, VII, 117.
62. Vincent, VII, 96.
63. A variant of Vincent VII, 102-3.
64. An " Ad laudem " legend.
66. The " Judaeus Rubescat " legend; a different version from that told by Thomas Cantimpratanus.
67. Pez. 41.
68. From Voragine, LI, 3.
69. A variant of the MS. Paris Bibl. Nat. Lat. 18134, No. 43.
70. Cf. Peter Damian, *De Horis Canonicis*, ch. 10. In Gautier de Cluny (Compiègne), *De Mir B.V.M.*, the clerk was a bell-ringer and there is no mention of golden letters found in his mouth, but the monk returned to life to do penance. In the Admont MS. 638 the details are somewhat different; the monks doubted whether he should be buried in consecrated ground until the words " salvatus est " were found in his mouth. In Pez No. 3 there are flowers in the place of letters.
73. Étienne de Besançon, *Alph. Narr.*, 12.
74. From Caes. VII. 36.
80. Herolt refers this to Vincent, *Spec. Hist.*, VII., 110a, cf. Toul. 482, iii. c. 24.
81. The following story in Vincent, i.e. 110b.
82. Vincent cited by Herolt gives the place as Avignon, as also does the MS. Paris Bibl. Nat. Lat., 12593, No. 3.

83. Vincent, *Spec. Hist.*, VII, 104, although not cited by Herolt. The story is also given by John de Garlandia (thirteenth cent.). See note on 21.

84. An "Ad laudem" miracle, Pez 15.

85. Legends of pictures of the Virgin painted by the Evangelist St Luke were numerous in the Middle Ages. The best known is that recorded by Theodorus, Rector of Constantinople, that the Empress Eudoxia sent such a picture from Jerusalem to Constantinople to be placed on the walls of the Hodegon Church. Many replicas of the Hodegetria, as it was called, spread from the East through Europe. For a discussion of "Luke" pictures see Beissel (*Die Verehrung*, etc., ch. V.) In the MS. Brit. Mus. Cleop. c. 20 it is stated that there were in Constantinople two images of the Mother of God "vouched for by heavenly miracles", one in Agia Sophia, which Justinian built, another in the Blacherne Church, the work, it was said, of Nicodemus. A Jew stole this and defiled it.

87. The origin of the *Salve Regina* has been claimed for several authors, and with a good deal of circumstance for Bishop Adhémar of Puy, who in 1098 died on a crusade at Antioch. It was called Antiphona de Podio because the Cathedral of Puy was dedicated to the Mother of God. The most likely author of it, however, was Hermannus Contractus (1054). The original beginning seems to have been "Salve Regina misericordiae," which was later changed to "Salve Regina, mater misericordiae". See Beissel, ch. XI.

92. There is a story like this in Peter Damian (988-1072), Letter XXXII.

93. Being one of the "Ad laudem" group, this is found in a great number of manuscripts.

94. This is not a miracle but records the reasons for dedicating Saturday to Mary.

95. Closely similar stories occur in Caesarius, II, 12, and in Vincent 105-6. It is reminiscent of the Theophilus legend, No. 42, but here there is no indenture and further episodes in the life of the chief character are given; the tempter is described in Caesarius as "a steward, a wicked man, Christian in name but not in fact and wholly given up to the service of demons". See also Warner in his notes to *Miracles de nostre Dame*, Collected by Jean Mielot XXXIX.

97. From Thos. Cant., *De Apibus*, 8.

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